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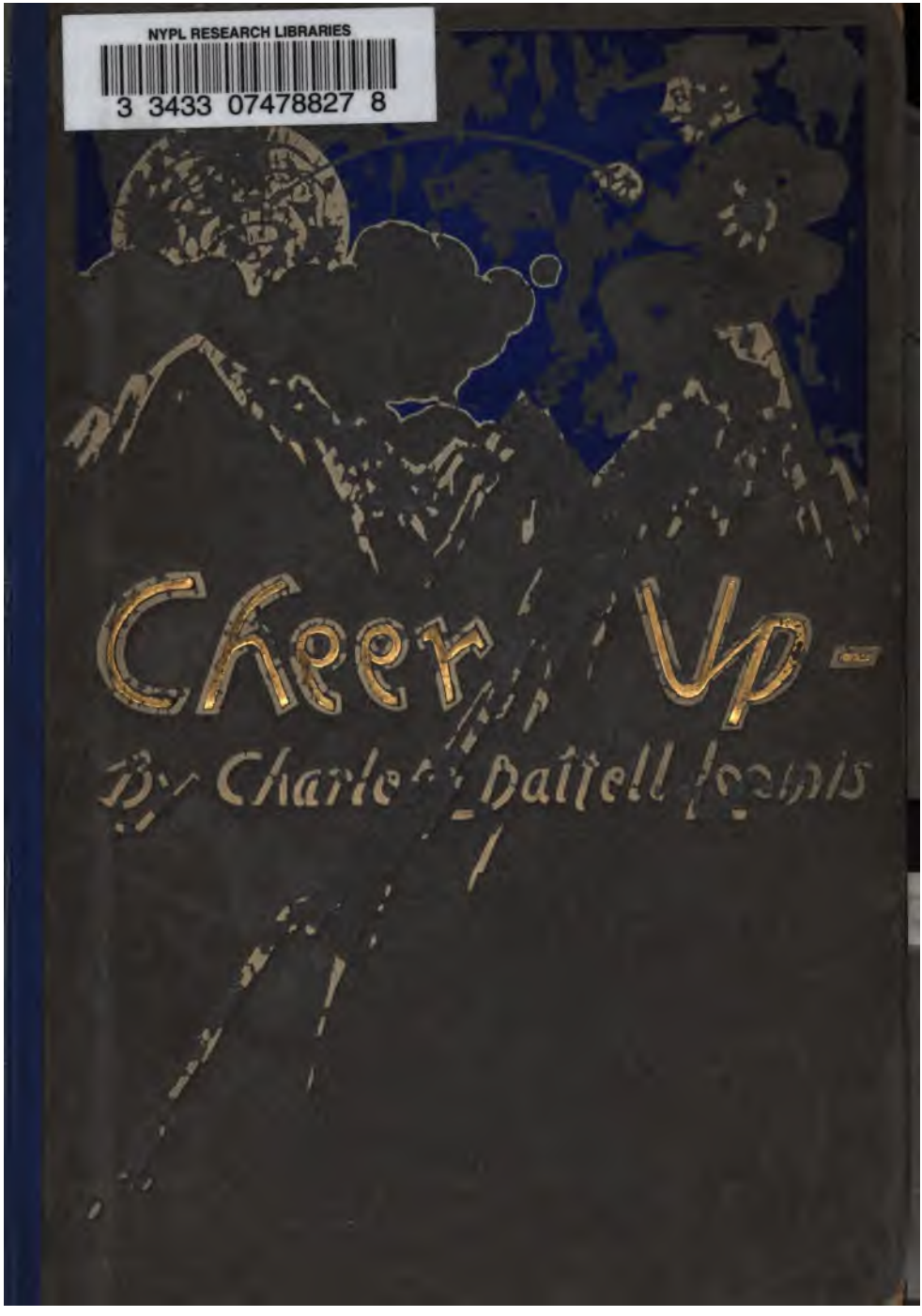

1. American Literature - Misc.

Cheer Up!

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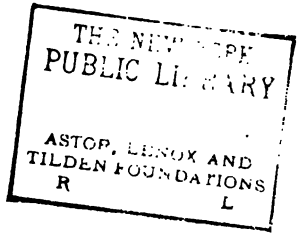
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"THE POOR WAS MAD"

Cheer Up!

BY

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

NEW YORK

JAMES POTT & COMPANY

1906

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PREFACE

WHEN the first book in this series was prepared and the time came to name it, I set down fifty names as titles, and out of those fifty I chose "I've Been Thinking." It proved to be a good title for one reason if for no other, for it gave the critics a chance to get gay with me.

Some said that after reading "I've Been Thinking" they wondered what I had been thinking about; others wanted to know what connection my book had with my title; still others wondered whether I was *sure* I had been thinking, and altogether I felt that I had been a benefactor to the reviewers in making their labors comparatively easy—I speak advisedly, for I have been a reviewer myself.

Now the time has come to name this col-

G.U. TRANSFER APR 21 1939

lection and I cast aside the obvious title, "I've Been Thinking Again" (for I haven't), and have decided to call it "Cheer Up." This will also be in the way of a favor to critics, for they will say "'Cheer Up'—the worst is yet to come—and duly follows the title."

In reading the book, cheer up—it is not far to the last page and it is given to you to skip—in itself an act of good cheer. What so cheerful as little lambs who do nothing but skip?

Cheer up. Society may let you in next month and you can stop climbing.

Cheer up. You may yet pass without a condition.

Cheer up. The mine in Alaska that seems extinct may yet flow filthy lucre.

Cheer up. She may accept if you ask again.

Cheer up. To be sure you've failed, but at least you're not a grafter.

Cheer up. What if it was a girl? Isn't a good girl better than a bad boy?

Cheer up. Diogenes would have found him at the Capitol. I mean it.

Cheer up. The canal will yet be built.

Cheer up. Perhaps you'll pick a winner next time.

Cheer up. Remember San Francisco.

Cheer up. Muck raking has its uses and the United States of to-day is better than was the United States of a year ago.

Cheer up. Go to a poor man and borrow it. He's been there himself.

Cheer up. Send it to another editor.

Cheer up. And then maybe your congregation will cheer up.

Cheer up. He loves you still. That's the trouble.

Cheer up. You may make a hit in the next play.

Cheer up. They're beginning to believe in American art.

Cheer up. He isn't handsome, but he has brains and he'll be good to her.

Cheer up. He isn't very brainy, but he's good looking and that's the sort of husband she wanted.

Cheer up. He is not kind to her, but she's in the peerage. Still, you have my sympathy.

Cheer up, and take what's coming to you. So saying, I hand you the book.

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

Cheer Up

HE was born of rich but honest parents." That is the way the moral story of the future will speak of the hero.

Riches have begun to bear a taint, there's no doubt of it.

Why, I never have rich persons in my house. They wouldn't think of coming.

I'm sorry for the children of the rich. The time is coming when poor children will refuse to sit by them in school and will point the finger of scorn at them and say, "His father is rich," and then some friendly soul will say, "Not very, is he?"

"Yes, very."

And they will pass by the poor, little, rich boy and leave him to wish with all his heart that

his father had thought of other things besides making money.

We who are honest, I say, we who are poor, have been spared the heartache that comes to those rich people who read denunciatory editorials. We know why we are very poor. They know why they are very rich.

If they would tell us a perfectly honorable way of becoming immensely rich so that we might help the poor we wouldn't mind seeking riches ourselves. But we have been told that no multi-millionaire can be honest and we are glad to believe it. It furnishes a delightful excuse for our pitiable poverty.

But, mothers, don't be too hard on the rich. Remember there are sometimes mitigating circumstances. Perhaps Mrs. Pluto Kratt wanted to remain poor and her husband wouldn't let her. Are you going to shut her and her children out of your home the same as if she had made the money herself?

Let her join your circle. She can help the church—and the most tainted money in the world is purified and deodorized if put to charitable uses—and you may find that even if rich, she is a human being like yourself, with many of your most precious foibles.

Be kind to the rich; the time is coming when they will need kindness.

But the time is passing when riches alone shall bring honor. Soon *great* riches will be synonymous with dishonor.

Be kind to the rich.

WANCE upon a toime the poor was virry poor indade, an' so they wint to a rich leddy that was that rich that she had goold finger-nails an' was that beautifil that it 'u'd mek you dopey to look at her. An' the poor asht her would she give thim the parin's of her

goold finger-nails fer to sell. An' she said she would that, an' that ivery Chuesdeh she did be afther a-parin' her nails. So of a Chuesdeh the poor kem an' they took the goold parin's to a jewel-ery man, an' he gev thim good money fer thim. Wasn't she the kind leddy, childher? Well, wan day she forgot to pare her nails, an so they had nothin' to sell. An' the poor was mad, an' they wint an' kilt the leddy intoirely. An' when she was kilt, sorra bit would the nails grow upon her, an' they saw they was silly to kill her. So they wint out to sairch fer a leddy wid silver finger-nails. An' they found her, an' she was that beautifil that her face was arl the colors of the rainbow an' two more besides. An' the poor asht her would she give thim the parin's of her silver finger-nails fer to sell. An' she said that she would that, an' that ivery Chuesdeh she did be afther a-parin' her nails. So of a Chuesdeh the poor kem an' they took the silver parin's to the jewel-ery man, an' he

gev thim pretty good money fer thim, but not nair as good as fer the goold. Sure, he was the cute jewel-ery man. Well, wan day she forgot to pare her nails, an' so they had nothin' to sell. An' the poor was mad, an' they wint an' kilt the leddy intoirely. An' whin she was kilt, sorra bit would the nails grow upon her, an' they saw they was silly to kill her. So they wint out to sairch for a leddy wid tin finger-nails. An' they found her, an' she was that beautiful that she would mek you ristless. An' the poor asht her would she give thim the parin's of her tin finger-nails fer to sell. An' she said she would that, an' that ivery Chuesdeh she did be afther a-parin' her nails. So of a Chuesdeh the poor kem. An' did they git the tin nails, childher? Sure, they did not, fer the leddy had lost a finger in a mowin'-machine, an' she didn't have tin finger-nails at arl, at arl—only noine.

6 Cheer Up

THE other day I saw a new advertisement. It represented a woman lying in bed with a telephone at her elbow, and the inscription was, "Make your wife happy."

Has it come to this, then? Are we to be open to calls from our distant friends even at night? Imagine a tired woman in, say, Cranfield, New Jersey, her day's work done, going to bed and sinking into a deep and restful slumber at ten o'clock.

She has one of these telephone switches at her bedside, but as all her friends know her habit of early retiring, she is safe.

A friend of hers is journeying westward, a friend with more money than brains, and it enters his head at Toledo to call up Mrs. Brown and tell her he's well.

It is only nine o'clock in Toledo, and he reckons that she will be in the parlor playing

her evening game of solitaire—for Mrs. Brown is alone in the world.

Lazily rising from his chair in his hotel room he calls up Central and asks for "8 Cranfield" over in New Jersey.

Mrs. Brown is blissfully dreaming when the exasperating tinkle of her bell is heard.

She imagines fire, burglars and many other dreadful things and rises to a sitting posture.

"Who's there?" she cries in panic fear.

Tinkle, tinkle goes the bell, impelled by far distant hands.

"Oh, dear! Some one is sick."

She grasps the receiver and cries, "Who is it?"

"Yes, this is Mrs. Brown."

"Who?"

"Mr. Birdkin? You want to see me?"

"No, I don't want to *see* you because I can't. I'm too far away."

"Why! Aren't you in your house?"

"No, oh, no. I'm in Toledo, Ohio."

"Think of it—Toledo, Ohio."

"Well, I'm in bed." (This very tartly.)

"Oh, I beg a thousand pardons. Why—er—what are you in bed for at this time of day? It's barely nine."

"You don't mean it. Hold the wire and I'll get up. My clock must be wrong."

Mrs. Brown doesn't feel comfortable talking to a man even as far away as Toledo when she has donned night's habiliments. She rises hastily and begins to dress.

Arrayed in a kimono she takes up the receiver again.

"That you, Mr. Birdkin? What did you want to say?"

"Nothing in particular. Awful night, isn't it?"

"Why, no, the moon is shining."

"Wild storm here. Oh, by the way. Just happened to think. There's a difference of an

hour in the time between here and Cranfield. So you've retired?"

"No, I'm up now. What did you want to say?"

"Hope you're well."

"No, I'm *not*. I need *sleep*. George Birdkin, haven't you anything better to do than to rouse lonely women out of their beds to tell them it's raining in Toledo?"

Hangs up receiver and preparing for bed again lies awake for an hour, while George calls up a lady in Denver, who is just sitting down as hostess at a dinner party, but makes her guests all wait while Mr. Birdkin says that it is raining in Toledo, and what is it doing in Denver?

No, the telephone is an impertinent and tactless interruption, day or night.

Cheer Up

THE Dedlydul family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Dedlydul, Johnnie, aged six, and Mabel, aged five, are discovered sitting at supper with their guest, Mr. Percy Flage de Witt, the brilliant *raconteur*.

Mr. Dedlydul — It has always seemed to me, Mr. de Witt, that the hospitable board lends itself more readily to diverting converse than any other place. As food for the body goes into the mouth, it should be accompanied by food for the mind.

Mrs. D.— Very happily put. (To Mr. de Witt)— We have heard great things of your powers of conversation, Mr. de Witt, and I hope that you are in a mood to scintillate at our humble board.

Mr. de Witt — I'm afraid that my powers have been overstated. You remember ——

Johnnie — Mamma, my chair's sticky.

Mabel — It's jelly he spilled last night.

Mrs. D.— Hush, both of you. What were you saying, Mr. de Witt?

De W.— Oh — er — it slipped my mind, but Johnnie's remark reminds me that once when I was dining out at the house of the late Chief Justice Waite, I asked him ——

Mabel — Can't I have some more butter?

Mr. D.— Hush!

De W.— I said to the judge ——

Johnnie — Oh, mamma, Mabel spilled ——

Mrs. D.— Hush!

Mr. D. (ponderously) — Your story of Chief Justice Waite reminds me of an occasion. It was many years ago when the railroads were not as well equipped as they are now. My father lived in the western part of the State, and he was a great stickler for etiquette — Johnnie, take your fork out of your hair — and one day in the dead of winter, when the traveling was very bad, we had the Bishop to dinner, and of course

my father was anxious to make a good impression — Take your fingers out of the butter, Johnnie.

De W.— Johnnie evidently wished to make a good impression upon the butter.

Mrs. D.— Very good.

Mr. D.— Johnnie's table manners need molding, Maria.

De W.— He thought the butter needed it too, I suppose.

Mrs. D.— You're very quick to seize an opportunity, Mr. de Witt.

De W.— One has to be quick, sometimes.

Mr. D.— Your saying that, reminds me of an anecdote of General Grant in the ——

Mrs. D.— Oh! Henry, tell Mr. de Witt that clever remark of Lieutenant Halton's. I'm sure Mr. de Witt will appreciate it.

Mr. D.— If he hasn't heard it already; witty things travel fast. Have you heard Lieutenant Halton's clever *bon mot?*

De W. (interested) — No, I haven't.

Mr. D.— Some one told him that Tennyson was no more ——

Johnnie — I know more than Mabel.

Mabel — You do not!

Mr. D.— Children, will you keep quiet?

Johnnie — Mamma, what makes Mr. de Witt's ears stick out so?

Mr. D — Johnnie, leave the room!

De W. (pleasantly) — Not on my account. I like my ears better that way, Johnnie. I can hear better. Pardon me for interrupting you, Mr. Dedlydul. What did Lieutenant Halton say?

Mr. D.— Really, the children annoyed me so that it's slipped my mind.

De W.— One's mind does get slippery when there are buds of promise around.

Mabel — What are buds of promise?

De W.— They are generally peach crops that are going to be failures.

Mrs. D.— Oh, how clever, Mr. de Witt!

De W.— That reminds me of what Doctor Holmes said.

Mrs. D.— Now, children, listen.

De W.— In the Autocrat he says ——

Johnnie — Must I eat this bread? It's all crusts.

Mr. D.— Will you be quiet?

Mrs. D. (confusedly) — I — I — think I remember the passage.

Mr. D.— Can't I help you to something?

De W. (irrelevantly) — Thanks, no. I'm perfectly helpless. You remember what Dean Swift said of the shoulder of beef?

Johnnie — Mamma, what's a soldier of beef?

Mrs. D.— Hush!

Johnnie — Oh, is he going to recite something? Will he make funny faces?

Mr. D.— Hush, and listen. By the way, if I may interrupt you for a moment, when I was a boy I went to school in Vermont. It was when

abolition sentiment ran high, and every Wednesday we had to recite a poem. My uncle ——

Johnnie — I recited to-day at school.

De W.— What did you recite?

Mrs. D.— Johnnie, be quiet. Your father is talking.

Johnnie (oblivious) — I recited At Midnight in His Guarded Tent ——

Mabel — What is a gardy tent?

Mrs. D.— Suppose we go into the parlor. Unless I can serve you with something more?

De W.— Not anything, thank you. Well, this has been very enjoyable. We've had quite a talk between us, haven't we?

Mrs. D.— Yes, the children were pretty good to-night. Sometimes they interrupt, as children will.

De W. (gallantly) — Your children but whet the edge of conversation.

Mabel — What is the edge of conversation?

Mr. D. (who has been waiting for a chance) — Well, as I was saying, my uncle ——

Exeunt omnes.

Curtain.

THE other day I heard of a man who went on working after he had become a multi-millionaire, seeking his office at eight in the morning and working until five.

The same day I heard of a farmer who died of hard work on his farm at the age of seventy-five.

And I also heard about that time of a mother who devoted her entire time to her three sons, living for them and giving up all forms of social life that interfered with her care for them.

Three poor slaves?

No, three happy persons.

The multi-millionaire was fond of the hard but exciting game of making his fellow-men yield him increase.

The farmer was fond of the hard but to him interesting game of making the earth yield her increase.

The mother was fond of the hard but delightful game of making *her* increase, increase in stature and mind and heart.

A happy trio.

Pity is not for them.

THE 2.25 train on the Naugatuck road was working up the beautiful valley of that name. Several passengers in the smoker, oblivious of the scenery, whiled away their time by telling the most dreadful experiences that had happened to them. I sat where I could

hear it all, yet took no part in the conversation. I was on my way to Torrington, near the end of the division.

Said one of them, a drummer for a John street iron house, who was on his way to Winsted, the terminus of the road:

"Three years ago I was traveling in Western Pennsylvania, and I put up for the night in a little one-horse tavern in an oil town. I am a sound sleeper, but in the middle of the night I suddenly awoke. Something was in my hand. The moon shed a white light on everything in the room, and I found that the something was a knife, reeking with blood. I cast it from me with a cry, and it fell, not to the floor, but on a soft object which turned out to be the body of a man, still warm. Who had done the hideous deed I knew not, but I realized that if I were to be found in the room with the dead man, I would be seized for the murder. I hastily dressed, and then, moved by curiosity, I opened the man's

card case and took from it one of his visiting cards. I put it in my vest pocket, and from that day to this minute I had forgotten all about it."

"Let me see the card," asked the clerical-looking member of the party. The drummer handed the card to him. He read the name, turned ghastly white, and fell in a faint. By the rarest chance another drummer in the party had a flask of whiskey, and the man was brought around. As soon as he could speak he said:

"I have been permitted to live to this day that I might have revenge. The man who was so foully murdered in that inn was——" But just then the brakeman called out "Waterville —change for Oakdale and Watertown," and the clerical-looking man hurried off the car.

The drummer sat silent for a few minutes, and then beads of sweat burst out on his forehead, and he said:

"I'd give anything to know the name of the man who just got off."

"That's easy done. As it happens, I know the whole circumstances of that murder," said a gray-bearded man, who hitherto had not spoken. "I know the man who just got off, and I can well understand why you wish to discover his identity. His name is——"

"Thomaston!" called out the brakeman.

"George!" said the bearded man. "I came near missing my station." And he grabbed his bag and was gone.

An ex-detective sat just behind the drummer, and he said:

"If I were still in the detective business I should have nabbed that man for the murder of the fellow in the Pennsylvania inn. And yet it is a lucky thing for you that he got off just now, because——" Here a messenger boy ran into the train from the station platform and said:

"Is George Hemingway on this train?"

"That's my name," said the ex-detective.

He opened the telegram and immediately had a stroke of apoplexy.

"If I am not mistaken," said the big, bluff man, a merchant from Ansonia, "this man was just about to disclose a secret that would have affected your whole life." This he said to the drummer, who, trembling violently, asked him why.

"When you know his name you will know why. That man is not George Hemingway, but——" Here the train passed over a trestle, making such a noise that the name of the ex-detective was not caught by the drummer. Again the beads, the identical beads that had bespangled his brow before, appeared there once more, and in an agony of mingled fear and curiosity, he said:

"For Heaven's sake tell me and end this awful suspense."

"Fluteville!" called the brakeman, and the Ansonia merchant rose and left the train.

By this time my interest in the matter was at fever heat, and I determined to learn why the drummer was so torn by his emotions if he were not the guilty man.

I was several minutes in making up my mind to speak, but at last I braced myself, and, assuming a stern, dictatorial tone, I said, suddenly:

"Who killed the man in the inn?"

"Torrington!" called the brakeman, in inexorable tones, and I had to get off, for I had reached my destination.

SCENE: Business man's office. Busy man seated at desk busily engaged in being busy. Enter female book agent.

Female Book Agent (insinuatingly) — Good morning. I have here a little work ——

Busy Man (brusquely) — And I have here a good deal of work.

F. B. A. (persistently) — But I'd like a little of your time ——

B. M. (briskly)—Sorry, but I haven't any time.

F. B. A. (cajolingly) — Don't you wish to join the crowds ——

B. M. (tartly) — Not till I'm through my work, but don't let that prevent your joining them at once. The streets are full ——

F. B. A. (despairingly) — Sir, can't I interest you?

B. M. (crisply) — It's to my interest if you can't. I'm busy.

F. B. A. (sympathetically)—So am I. That's the way I earn my living.

B. M. (wearily) — But you bother me.

F. B. A. (earnestly) — Join the "Don't Worry Society." Make up your mind that you won't be bothered. Now, this little work shows you how to save money.

B. M. (sapiently) — I know already. I'll avoid buying it.

F. B. A. (sweetly) — I think that I am very patient. When you are through talking I will proceed.

B. M. (politely) — Madam, I'll stop at once if you are sure that you'll proceed. Turn the knob to the right.

F. B. A. (calmly) — My business is not completed.

B. M. (testily) — Neither is mine.

F. B. A. (proudly) — The gentleman in the next office bought two copies.

B. M. (enthusiastically) — That lets me out. I'll borrow one of his. Good-day to you.

F. B. A. (pleadingly) — Please hear me out.

B. M. (resolutely) — I haven't time, but I'll take great pleasure in seeing you out. Good day.

(Sees her out.)

Curtain.

EXCEPT on extremely cold days American railway cars are overheated to a scandalous degree, being at least ten degrees warmer than is healthful. Now if the reason that American men and American women come into these cars and keep on their coats and capes and wraps is because they like to be heated to the point of roasting, then are they salamanders and this is not for them. But if they are lazy and keep on their ulsters and paletots because it is too much trouble to remove them, then they may learn the practice of wisdom from one of the humblest of travelers, remove their furs and shawls and overcoats, and be comfortable. And if they are merely absent-minded and wonder why they dread the daily ride to and from their suburban homes, then let me tell them loudly that it is because they forget to take off those outdoor wraps that they would never think of wearing in their own living-rooms.

To a nervous man whose blood circulates freely, the spectacle of seemingly sane men and women buttoned up in garments of fur or other heavy stuffs when the temperature is exploring the tube in the neighborhood of ninety degrees is one calculated to plunge him into an untimely perspiration, and yet there is not a day in the winter when such a scene may not be witnessed wherever there are steam or fire heated steam railroads.

How can you stand it, fellow-passengers? And how can you run the risk of letting that little boy of whom you are so fond keep his heavy pea jacket on when you know perfectly well that as soon as he reaches outside air he will be at the mercy of that biting nor'easter, with nothing extra to cover his shivering, because erstwhile superheated body?

Disease stalks up and down the train like the vender of candies, crying in inaudible but none the less terrible tones: "Plenty of time before

the train gets there to catch pneumonia, consumption, laryngitis and all the other unpopular ills! Keep your coats buttoned up while the brakeman hermetically seals the ventilators and runs the steam heat to the topmost notch!"

To-morrow, when the doctor calls you will say, "I'm sure I don't know how I caught cold, for I have kept myself so warm."

But your mortal enemy, the brakeman, could tell you. He and the fur wraps and that heavy ulster and the sizzling hot steam heat and the bad air and your crass idiocy all helped with a right good will. And if you escape pneumonia and have another chance to ride in the swiftly propelled infernos, do you think that you will remember what you have escaped and hang your little coat on the hook provided for that purpose?

28 Cheer Up

DEAR READERS: You may be my superiors in a thousand ways; you may be sweeter tempered, possessed of better memories or wider learning or finer spirituality, but we have a common weakness—we always forget to inclose a clipping, or money, or a handkerchief, or whatever it is that we say "I inclose herewith." Don't we? Now why is this, gentle readers? You have good memories for faces or for figures or for stories; why do you fall down on so simple a thing as inclosing an article when you say you're going to?

Think of how it vexes you when you are the recipient of a letter that says, "I am inclosing herewith a little embroidered handkerchief as a birthday gift. I worked it myself and feel sure that you will like it." Only that and nothing more—no handkerchief. Or else it is, "I am sure that you will enjoy as much as I did the droll story which I have cut out and inclose.

Please write me at once what you think of it, as to-morrow I am going to India to be gone seven years, and I want to get your opinion before I go." But the clipping is not in the envelope. And you are vexed, because you value your opinion of stories and would like above all things to tell your friend what you thought of his tale.

Or worst form of all is the last: "I am sending you a check for twenty-five dollars in payment for that picture you sent me. Please acknowledge receipt." Of course you never needed a twenty-five dollar check as you need that one, but equally, of course, your friend forgot to inclose it. Don't blame him, however, for you would have forgotten it yourself.

The art of inclosing is a lost art. Here and there there may be a man who can inclose when he says he is going to, but he is mighty scarce.

The most exasperating form of neglected inclosure is when your correspondent says, "It

is vastly important that you should know about the inclosed at once, so instead of copying it out myself I send you a cutting which I wish returned immediately. I hope it will reach you in time."

There is nothing else in the envelope at first sight, and you open it to its widest extent, feeling all the while as if you had been cut off at the telephone just after some one has said, "Your uncle has died and left——" You are in an agony of curiosity, but you must possess your soul in patience until your friend finds the clipping and sends it in a later mail.

Make up your minds, then, dear readers, while it is yet early in the year, that hereafter you will be inclosers. Put your inclosure in, even if you forget to write the letter. The inclosure is the *raison d'être* of the matter. Don't leave it out.

I am too old to learn this new trick, but with you there is yet time. Inclose.

AS a married man I want to enter my protest against the senseless practice of house-cleaning. Cannot housewives see that the act is an admission of poor housekeeping ability? A well-kept house is clean. That is an axiom. And if it is clean, where is the need of house-cleaning?

I am not the first man to cry out against this practice. I remember to have read numerous articles by the funny men of the press directed against this vice, but to me the affair has no funny side. Is it humorous to have to move all your belongings from one room to another in a vain effort to escape the deadly ravages of the housewife? Is it a joke to have to eat your meals on the gas-stove and do your writing on the stationary tubs while your wife and the maids are rubbing imaginary dirt from the dining-room and sweeping it from your study?

A woman with the fever of house-cleaning

upon her is not responsible for her acts. There is no woman living who is so sweet-tempered that she can go through an attack of house-cleaning without turning—her temper. There is no man alive who is so angelic that he can avoid giving his wife offense while she is under the fell influence of the national disease. Does a man tell you that he helped his wife put up or take down the dining-room stove without any hard words? Trust him not, he is fooling thee, as Longfellow was in the habit of saying.

A soft answer turneth away wrath, but not when you are helping your wife take up the matting. She will bowl over your soft answer with words hard enough to drive tacks. If a young man, instead of trying to find out the quality of his *fiancée's* temper by taking her to the theater and to evening parties, would visit her at her home when she and her mother are roaming unshackled all over the house in the last stages of house-cleaning, marriage would not

be so lightly entered into, nor would divorces be so disgustingly prevalent.

Nor is a woman to be blamed for becoming infuriated over the process of house-cleaning. A man may be in Wall street during a panic, he may be the overseer of a gang of incompetents, he may be the superintendent of an insane-asylum, but he will never have any experiences so trying to his temper as the useless but seemingly inevitable experience of house-cleaning.

I picked up a paper this morning, and in the local notes was the report of an accident to a young woman. She had smashed her thumb while house-cleaning. Is a clean house worth a flattened thumb? Are spick-and-span rooms worth the alienation of a husband's affections?

What is it to the minister that his wainscoting looks fresh and clean, when the style of his sermon has been muddied by many interruptions? Why should the poet be proud that his wife has polished the legs of the piano and

brightened the hands of the clock, when the feet of his poem have been so injured that they limp under the stern eye of the reviewer? What is it to the domestic man that his bedroom is sweet and fresh, while the wife of his bosom is hag-worn and soured by the process?

House-breaking is less of a crime than house-cleaning. It is less insidious. It is attended with fewer hard words, with much less noise and displacement of dust, and it is accomplished by an avowed enemy of society instead of by the companion of your life-journey. And it is vastly more successful—from the burglar's point of view at least.

I knew a man in Chicago who made a practice of never marrying until after his prospective wife had finished her annual house-cleaning. As a consequence, his marriages were singularly happy ones.

But the most diabolic kind of house-cleaning is that form which attacks some women who

have had generations of thrifty and neat forebears, but who themselves are anything but neat. With these women house-cleaning is an involuntary act. They go through the motions, they have all the symptoms in their most aggravated form; the husband eats in the kitchen; the wife's temper is lost beyond hope of a clew; and in spite of all, the house is not clean. These are like the dog who turns around thrice before lying down—he knows not why; or the hen brought up on a macadamized floor, who scratches as hard as did her ancestors in the garden.

Women who in other respects are singularly open to reason, and whose minds are as progressive as a game of eucher, will stand up for this habit with all the narrow-mindedness of a backwoods woman. Ask any woman of your acquaintance whether she believes in cleaning house, and she will look at you as if she thought your sanity in doubt. Then ask any married

man, and he will tell you that the vermiform appendix is not more useless than house-cleaning. With this difference of opinion between the sexes, it is easy to fancy the bitter words that are laid to the credit of a couple that have been married sixty years, and whose house has been devastated three-score times by the whirlwind of house-cleaning.

Spring would be the most delightful season of the year if house-cleaning were abolished. To the house-cleaner the odors of the woods and fields appeal in vain; sweeter to her is the smell of soap and patent cleansers. The tender grace of the adolescent maple leaves is as nothing while the walnut leaves of the extension-table need scouring.

Happy is that man whose wife never allows her house to get dirty, for to him house-cleaning shall be unknown, and the passage of the lives of the twain shall be as calm and unruffled as that of two leaves upon the bosom of a placid

stream. And the address of that wife shall be found in the directory of the millennium.

A CERTAIN young man had a father. And the father was an artist. And when the young man cast about to see what he could do to support himself in luxury, he decided to become a plumber.

Now, this was a natural craving of his nature, for from his childhood he had put off doing that which he had to do.

But his father, who was a successful artist, and therefore a hard worker, wished him to become a member of the same honorable guild, and he grieved that his son should lean toward plumbing.

So he took him aside, and said:

"My son, my father was a hard-working artist

and his father before him, and I wish no son of mine to pursue so butterfly a trade as that of a plumber. We have always earned our bread by the sweat of our brows, and although bread has ofttimes been scarce, yet there has been a plenitude of sweat. Why depart from the traditions of a long line by becoming a plumber?"

And the young man made answer: "Father, I have surreptitiously learned the trade of plumbing, and I find it to my liking. And its emoluments are great. I do not care for work, and the painting of pictures is hard work."

But the young man was dutiful, and he studied art. And he became a mediocre and unsuccessful artist.

For he painted like a plumber.

Moral: A good many plumbers have been lost to the world.

AN EGG that had lain in its nest for a whole day with nothing to do said to its mother, "Mother, I am tired of staying here idle. The city is the place for an aspiring young ovoid like myself, and I mean to go there. In the city one can see something and be something, but here I am only referred to as 'that fresh young egg.'"

And the mother hen sighed and said, "My child, let well enough alone. I have heard of the temptations that beset one in a great city. The bloom of innocence is soon rubbed from a young egg and the end is ruination. Stay here and be hatched, and when you are a chicken if you are lucky enough to escape my feet in the first week of your existence you will find that the country is a lovely place in which to live."

But the young egg was obstinate, and that night, together with some other eggs as fresh as itself, it went to the city. And for a few

days it was as happy and virtuous as could be desired, but in the course of a few weeks it fell in with some loose eggs that lay around a corner grocery, and at last, as its mother had feared, the egg became bad and that was the end of it.

Moral: The city is no place for fresh eggs.

CHARACTERS: Frank Purson, Miss Gushe, and one other. (*After the solo.*)

Frank Purson — Who was that?

Miss Gushe — I don't know. Some vocalizer. No temperament.

F. P.— He might be covered with it and I wouldn't know. But I think that no singer can afford to be without it long, nowadays. Though a man have the voice of an angel and have not temperament, it profiteth him nothing.

G.— Why, that's in the Bible, isn't it?

F. P.— Something very like it. I wonder who it was that sang. I liked his voice.

G.— Oh, it wasn't anybody in particular (listens). Oh, I heard Mrs. Chattington say it was Zhan Derewski of the opera.

F. P.— I was right in liking him.

G.— The dear man. Wasn't it lovely? Not so much the voice as the way he used it. What temperament!

F. P.— Yes, he seems to have had a supply, after all. His temperament seems to grow on you, don't you think?

G.— Oh, I do wish he would sing again.

F. P.— Yes, so do I, now that I know who he is.

G.— Oh, he's going to sing an encore. How adorable! (The man sings again.)

F. P.— Ah, wasn't that delicious? (Sighs.) Oh, those Poles! They seem to be born with divine voices and charms of person that generally come only after much hard work.

G.— I can never tell whether you are joking or not, you look so serious. Sometimes I think you don't really like music.

F. P.— Oh, I adore it when so valuable a singer interprets it.

G.— Oh, there's Mr. Dagby! Didn't Zhan sing divinely? What a lovely tenor voice.

Mr. D.— He will when he sings. He's going to now. That man who just sang is a baritone. I forget his name — hasn't much of a one yet — pupil of Solfari. Now Zhan begins. Shh!

F. P. (In a whisper) — I take back all I said about his temperament. Of course, he can't have acquired it if he's only a pupil. I like his voice, though.

G.— I don't. He's positively an impostor.

AN oyster, which had but lately left its bed, strolled into a barnyard on the river bank one hot July morning. And, being of a discontented temperament, it began to bemoan its lot.

"Why am I so little and homely and circumscribed? Look at that proud and beautiful rooster. He has everything to be thankful for, whereas I have nothing."

Even as he spoke a man came out of the house with an axe in his hand and cut off the head of the rooster. "You'll do for my dinner," said he.

Said the oyster to a hen who was hiding under a burdock leaf, "Why, there is no 'r' in this month! Why was the rooster killed?"

Said the hen, "Lucky oyster! you are safe all summer, but one month is as good as another to kill a fowl in."

Whereat the oyster perceived that it had much

to be thankful for. But its joy was of short duration, for a child who knew not the calendar came along at this juncture, and made short work of the bivalve.

THERE is no doubt that this world would be a sightlier place if all advertisements were removed from the unresisting face of nature, and undoubtedly they would have been done away with long ago if it had not been for the sentimentalists, who are unwilling to disturb the ancient landmarks that their fathers erected.

Years ago in a New England village a young man fell in love with a maiden. He used to meet her every evening at their trysting-place —an old rail fence on which in letters of white paint was traced the legend, "Hufland's Austrian Bitters are good for Dyspepsia."

It is probable that the young man did not once knowingly look at that simple sign nor did the girl, but there it was, a part of the scene, as much a part as the singing of the birds, the twitter of the crickets, or the rippling note of the "peepers." One evening when the crescent moon was silvering the dying day and little birds sang madrigals, he asked the maiden to be his wife, and his subconsciousness took in the words on the fence even as his ears listened to the whispered words that made him her accepted lover.

The next day he parted from the girl and went West to seek his fortune. Other places, other faces — and pretty faces, too — and it is small wonder that his young blood was stirred by the comeliness of a Western maiden who was withal a flirt. Perhaps he wavered in his love for the one in the East, perhaps he was merely thoughtless and sought to while away the lonely hours. But once when he and the young

woman were out walking and admiring the beauties of nature he saw painted in white letters upon a venerable rock the words, "Hufland's Austrian Bitters are good for Dyspepsia."

In an instant the scene of his betrothal came to him — the old rail fence, the pallid crescent moon lighting the dying day to its death-bed, the wheetling, whirtling swallows, the lovely girl with the cupid mouth — and he conducted the young Westerner to her door and parted from her with a lift of the hat that spelled "Finis."

And always "Hufland's Austrian Bitters" was his talisman. When hope declined and advancement was slow, he would go out and gaze on some tree that had been decorated by the magic words, and then he would go back and work with renewed vigor for the girl.

At last he made enough to send for her, and she came out to him and they were married,

and his wedding-present to her was a bottle of Hufland's Bitters, which the sensible girl valued more than she would have prized a necklace of diamonds.

Years passed on, prosperous years, and the two were happy, but ever and anon vague longings stirred them, and at last they realized that they wanted to go and lean on the fence and read the old original sign.

Let it not be thought for a moment that I am an advocate of out-door advertising, but mark the sequel. During the years that had passed since the girl had left her native town a Village Improvement Society had grown up that fiercely warred on defacements of nature and that went forth with destroying hands, and trees and rocks and fences that had lain under the spell of advertising letters were scraped clean and bare — perhaps hideously bare — who knows? Is not the change from a well-painted negro carrying a soup-tureen to a huge oval of scraped

rock too sudden to be natural, and should we not imitate Nature in all things, even in our defense of her?

Be that as it may, the young couple fared them forth to the place of their betrothal. Alas, the fence that had borne that magic sentence had been replaced by a rustic one and the cherished words were gone forever! Such a shattering of illusions, such a demolition of fondest fancies, such a tearing down of sweet memories is seldom seen. With wild cries the young couple fled again to the West, and the place of their bringing up shall know them no more forever.

IT was autumn, and in front of a house stood a maple tree whose leaves had turned to a scarlet so intense that one could scarce look without winking. And by its side stood a twin

maple whose leaves were like fairy plates of gold.

And within the house were two sisters, strangers in that land. And one said to the other, "See, sister, the newly risen sun has touched the trees in front of our dwelling, and they are beyond my power to describe, so beautiful are they."

But the other one was engrossed in household cares and she did not come to the casement. She said, "Of such a scene have I read in the poets. It must be transcendent. I wish that I might see it, but I have that which I would finish, and a joy that is anticipated is trebled."

Then the other, who sat at the casement and gave herself up to the feast of color that lay before her, said, "I could never imagine such beauty. I am glad that mine eyes can see it, and while it lasts I will watch it, that no change in the falling of the sunlight and shadow upon

it may escape my notice. Seeing it I can remember it, but if I saw it not I could not fancy such a scene."

So the one at the window waited and watched while the one within worked and anticipated. And when the clouds dimmed the sun's splendor, yet were the trees of surpassing loveliness, and when the sun shone upon them they were like glimpses of heaven. And ever the scarlet deepened and the yellow grew yet more golden.

The day passed on, the evening fell, and with the casting of night's shadows there came a wind that despoiled the trees of their leaves.

In the morning the woman who had anticipated viewing the trees, said, "To-day I, too, will feast my eyes and lay up stores for future remembrance." And she went to the casement and looked at the trees. And their glory had departed. Naked and thin and cold were their limbs, and of their beauty naught remained save

two heaps of fading leaves that had been gold and scarlet.

And the woman smote her breast and cried, "Of a truth, beauty is transitory."

Her sister made answer: "The remembrance of beauty is everlasting."

THE hero of a novel as yet unfinished, escaped from the sheets of manuscript in which he had been lying, and darted from the author's study, intent upon one thing — to escape the heroine whom he foresaw the author intended him to marry. "The author calls her pretty, but his ideas of beauty and mine are not the same. He says that she is witty, but if so, why has he put no wit in her mouth? As for being married to her in the last chapter, and having my taste called in question by a lot of

critics who know nothing beyond their calling, I simply won't stand it." And he walked out into the street and was lost in the crowd.

Meanwhile the author came to his desk, ready to begin his daily grind; for he had made such a reputation on his first novel that his orders would keep him busy for seven years, and he kept his thought-mill working day and night. He was at work upon the nineteenth chapter, in which the hero was absent on a visit, and the morning wore away before he noticed that he had escaped. Then he was in a great pother. He felt that it would be no use to put the matter into the hands of the detectives, for in his inmost heart he knew that his hero was so like every other romantic hero of the last decade that he could never be distinguished either in a crowd or alone. There was but one course open to him — to declare the hero dead, and have the heroship descend to the next in line. But, unfortunately, the next in line was his

brother and his rival, and to make him hero and give the girl to him would be contrary to the scheme of the novel.

She might have married the villain, but the author was too popular to risk being as unconventional as that. No; there was but one course open: to kill the girl in the twentieth chapter, and so make a tragic novel of the book. But tragic novels are poor sellers, and one poor seller might cause the canceling of orders for his future novels.

Canceling his orders! The driven author laid his aching head in his hands and pondered. Cancellation would mean freedom from the ceaseless grind, the eternal hunt for characters and incidents and plots and romanticism. Yes, he would kill the girl and accept the consequences with unruffled heart.

And so it happened that the heroine died of grief for the hero — in the twentieth chapter. And the capricious public, waiving for once

their desire for a happy ending, accepted the book with acclamations, and the poor author received orders fourteen years ahead.

And he went crazy and went on writing in his cell, and now his novels please only certain of the critics, who declare them mystical.

As for the escaped hero, he was now in real life, and as such a hero could never, by any chance, exist in real life, he died in a few days, and that was the end of him.

THE most uncomfortable-looking person at a reception or a musicale is the one who hasn't any small talk. He is more uncomfortable at the musicale because there is more chance for conversation there — particularly if there are many piano numbers.

If he is with some one who can do the talking herself he is all right, for then he can listen; but if his partner be also short of small talk then is their condition pitiable. He racks his brains for something to say. He has read that the weather is tabooed. Ah, if it were not, what a lot of things he could say! He wet his feet yesterday, and the day before he sat in a draft — why, there are endless possibilities in our weather.

He sits and gazes at his *vis-a-vis*, his eyes getting more and more feverish each moment. His mind is now a blank. Not because he is a fool, but because he is shy. At last he makes a momentous discovery. The fireplace in the front parlor is larger than the one in the back parlor.

Mr. White (with enthusiasm) — Why, have you noticed that the fireplace in here is a different size from the one in the front parlor?

Miss Purple (glad as he of a subject) — Why,

no, I hadn't noticed it. It is, isn't it? I wonder why.

Mr. W. (elated) — I'm sure I don't know. Maybe they were built at different times. Do you carry measurements in your head well?

Miss P.— No, I'm awfully stupid about them. Why do you ask?

Mr. W.— I was wondering how much difference there was between the fireplaces.

Miss P.— We might ask Mrs. Trouville. (Calls to the hostess, who is passing.) Mrs. Trouville, do you know how much bigger this fireplace is than the one in the front parlor?

Mrs. T.— Why, I don't think there's any difference. Why do you ask?

Mr. W.— We were — having quite a talk about it. I thought this was bigger — no, I mean the other.

Mrs. T.— I think they're identical. (Presents a new man to Miss Purple and takes Mr. White off to meet "an awfully nice girl.")

Mr. White's heart sinks. He was getting along so swimmingly on the subject of the fireplaces. He feels he was quite bright, and maybe this new girl won't care to talk about fireplaces at all. However, the plunge must be made.

Mrs. T.— Miss Green, let me present Mr. White.

Mr. W.— Charm —— I've been having quite a discussion with Miss Purple about the fireplaces.

Miss Green — Is it a riddle? I adore riddles.

Mr. W.— No — er — I mean these fireplaces. Don't you think this one is bigger than the other?

Miss G. (who is not bashful) — I never gave them any thought. Did you hear Siegfried?

Mr. W. (who is not musical) — No, I rarely attend lectures. I think that the front fire pl——

Miss G.— Been to the Water Color?

Mr. W. (in a blue funk)—What do you mean?

Miss G.— The exhibition.

Mr. W.— Oh — oh, no. I thought you said water cooler. I was wondering ——

Miss G. (maliciously) — What were you wondering?

Mr. W. (blankly) — I was wondering whether they meant to make those fireplaces different, or if it only happened so.

Miss G.— It must have required a good deal of study. Are you fond of reading? Ever read the Elsie books?

Mr. W. (flushing) — I've just finished Stevenson's works for the third time.

Miss G. (with fervor) —Oh, are you fond of Stevenson?

Mr. W.— Well, rather.

(They plunge into a spirited talk and fireplaces are forgotten. At last Mr. White feels perfectly at ease. Miss Green is thoughtful and bright, and he wishes the evening were to be twice as long.)

Mrs. T.— Miss Green, may I present Colonel Foxglove? Mr. White, I want you to meet Miss Stave, the composer.

And Mr. White is reduced to fireplaces again.

I CAME across the following in a paper printed twenty years hence:

"It is now but little more than a year since we received the first signal from Mars. What a sensation it made, to be sure! The question that had vexed centuries was solved at last. Mars had inhabitants. The earlier lights were somewhat dim, and no one imagined that the messages that were flashed by their means through millions of miles of ether would in time assume the proportions of a public nuisance.

"But night after night the light waxed stronger, and what were at first serious ques-

tions concerning our world, propounded by a scientist, degenerated into remarks not more volatile than they were impertinent.

"Last night, promptly at nine o'clock, the blinding flashes were turned on the earth, and those of our citizens who had assembled in the aerial park to witness the passage of the beautiful air-ship 'Light of the West,' on her nightly encircling of the globe, were forced to devote all their energies to dodging the annoying glare.

"It is only fair to suppose that it is some office-boy who in the absence of the astronomer indulges a love for mischief. The fact that he is beyond the reach of human agencies makes his conduct all the more distressing, and as his signalings are of very questionable taste, we can only hope that death comes to the inhabitants of Mars, and that this unquiet freak may soon fill a grave (if graves are filled in the planet) of the proper dimensions.

"A fortune awaits the man who invents a

means to rid the earth (we had almost said to rid the universe) of this destroyer of optic nerves. And until then we would advise people to stay in-doors during the half-hour that he devotes to his unseemly flashes of alleged wit."

IN my forthcoming book, "Advice to Young Writers," I intend to devote a chapter like the following to "The Weather in its Influence upon the Reader and the Plot." For few of our younger writers appreciate how important a part climatic conditions play in a truly great novel.

Your tyro will have the hero dying to an accompaniment of clearing skies and a westerly breeze. Of course, if he wishes to gain an effect by contrast, this is all right; but too often it is not intent, but inadvertence. The writer of

inexperience introduces weather simply as a bit of pleasant padding.

But with those to whom writing is not a trade, but a great art, the weather plays as important a part as it does in the conversation of a bashful man.

Let us quote from Bernard Considine's wonderfully successful novel, "From Wash-lady to Washington":

"The voice of a tiny baby's cry within the house for the first time in twenty years gave notice to all the retainers that a new lord had come to Aircliffe Castle. Outside the peep of new-born robins, across the sky the fleeting forms of feathery clouds touched with the coloring kiss of early morn. New life in the summer zephyrs, new fragrance in the climbing honeysuckle, and the tiny wail of a new voice within the castle."

That is beautiful. But who would have cared for it if Mr. Bernard Considine had surrounded

the castle with a fog and started a chorus of raucous rooks?

And in the twentieth chapter of the same book we have this memorable passage:

"Athwart the heavens dark, heavy, thunderous-looking clouds stole stealthily. The prescient boom of distant thunder presaged the coming storm. Oh, Sir Giles, wake up! Do you not see the villain who is to strike at thy fair young life, and who is even now ascending the servants' stairs and will soon move inevitably toward thy couch?"

Is not that masterly? You are prepared for the entrance of the villain as soon as the clouds come rumbling on. But what if the great Bernard had peopled the massy cavern of the sky with mackerel clouds?

Look at this passage on page 57 of the first edition (I believe that it is on page 60 in all later editions):

"The rain came in fitful gusts, and anon the

sun shone forth. Fleecy clouds, driven hither and thither by fickle winds, caromed across the rifts of blue. Lieutenant Clifton, twirling his mustache with impatience, awaited the answer of the mercurial Evadne. Yesterday he would have sworn she loved him. To-day he would swear nothing. Yes or no, her answer would surprise him not."

How well the great Considine knows! He does not surround that fateful scene with a snow-storm and let the cry of coasting youngsters be borne in through the heavy plate windows to where the lieutenant and Evadne stood.

Do you remember that immortal chapter where Mercy Morton, the repentant daughter, returns to her father's house — that house from which his hardness had driven her five years before? A man who placed no reliance upon the weather as a friend of his intentions and a subtle compeller of certain moods would, like as not, have made her walk in some bright May

morning, while little boys were spinning tops upon the sidewalk, and the grocer's cart had halted in front of the house, and the skies bore promise of a lovely day. But Bernard Considine never misses fire — or weather.

"The sleet fell in swirling, stinging sheets, as if each particle was bent on reminding Mercy that she had sinned. She leaned against the oaken door of her father's house, and it fell open. Her father, on his way to bed, started back as the half-frozen girl fell at his feet. He recognized her at a glance. Above the roar of the storm the voice of his conscience sounded in thunder tones, 'Forgive her, forgive her!' She had swooned, but he made a snowball of the sleet that covered her jet-black hair, and rubbed her forehead with it until his girl — his little girl — his little Mercy — his baby — sat up and cried, 'Father!'"

Stop the snow now. There is no more need of it. Old Mr. Morton has taken his little

daughter back to his heart, and the street-cleaners might as well begin their work.

I HAVE always heard that Schopenhauer was a very profound German philosopher and I have had an immense respect for his opinions, knowing but few of them, but willing to accept them on the hearsay of others.

It is always a pleasure to catch a weasel asleep. He looks so foolish when he opens his sharp little eyes and finds you've caught him napping.

Well, recently I came across some of the great, the very great German philosopher's opinions, and found the old fellow nodding like Homer.

For instance, here is what he says about women: "Women are directly adapted to act as the nurses and educators of our early childhood, for the simple reason that they themselves

are childish, foolish, and short-sighted; in a word, are big children all their lives, something intermediate between the child and the man."

Great is German philosophy, and Schopenhauer is its prophet.

But see him nod again.

If you're looking for pure humor, *you women* read this:

"Women should never have the free disposition of wealth, strictly so called, which they may inherit, such as capital, houses and estates. They need a guardian always; therefore they should not have the guardianship of their children under any circumstances whatever."

Think of that, you who took the helm when your husband died and have made the business pay; a thing he never was able to do. Think of that, you mothers of our Longfellows and Emersons and Motleys.

When a great man essays foolish news he can turn out a pretty good article.

ARE you going to be his mother or only his nurse's mistress?

If you're only going to be his nurse's mistress then you'll have an easy time and I wish you much joy of it.

You'll be able to attend lectures, play bridge, go out riding in autos with your fortunate neighbors, attend the matinee and go to evening dinners, while baby is being cared for by the ill-educated woman who has kindly consented to take him off your hands.

I wish the baby just as much joy of the arrangement, but I'm afraid he won't get it. He'll be (after all's said and done) a nursling instead of a "mother's baby." He'll catch the quaint little ungrammaticisms that nurse lets fall and he'll never be quite as refined as you are, but you'll really be much freer and you'll find marriage not half the responsibility you

understood it when your mother was talking to you about it.

But if you want to have a really superior sort of boy, why not discharge the girl — you can get another just as uneducated at any time — and try bringing him up yourself, the way that your mother brought you up?

There won't be as much bridge, and the matinees and evening dinners will most of them go by the board, but you'll have a boy brought up by a woman of refinement, and that's going to better the boy's chances all through life. Let the girl go this Saturday week.

And allow me to congratulate the baby.

THE other night I had been reading a compilation of wit and humor, and the names of John Phœnix, Artemas Ward, Josh Billings,

Bill Nye and many others were dancing before my eyes, so hard had I read and so long.

My chair being easy, and the hour being late, I closed my eyes and thought pleasant thoughts of the many men who in times past have lightened the burdens of hard-working Americans.

Then suddenly I became conscious of the fact that I could see through my closed lids, and there stood two men before me. One was plainly the Average Man, but the other seemed like a composite of all the humorists I had been reading. He was rather above the medium height, his eyes were brilliant and deep-sunken, his eyebrows shaggy, his nose aquiline and long, his lips full and mobile, but his expression was exceedingly sad.

"Who are you?" said the Average Man, and the other, answering, said:

"I am the Typical Humorist, and I have sought you out to tell you what my days are

like. I know that if I stand here long enough you will say, 'How does it feel to be funny?' and so I am going to save your question."

I, in my comfortable chair, could not conceal my joy, but I knew enough to keep my eyes shut. I have lost many a pleasant fancy through opening my eyes too soon.

"Tell me why you look so sad," said the Average Man.

"I knew you'd ask that," said the Humorist. "I look sad because I never forget that in the course of time I must die and cease to be a humorist."

He heaved a sigh, and went on: "Of course, the life of a humorist is one glad, mad frolic and rollick beneath his mask of sadness. His one idea is how to get the most fun out of existence, and despite the fact that he looks sad from the cause just mentioned, he is inwardly bubbling over with joy from the time he opens his eyes until he closes them in sleep.

"When he arises in the morning he jumps out of bed with a glad cry and a handspring and a merry jest which the Angel of Sleep gave him in the night, and of which he must deliver himself. In his pajamas — if he is modern, otherwise in his flapping nightshirt — he steps to the book-shelf and eagerly seizes on a book of humor penned by a brother in the craft. Loud and long is the laughter it evokes, and his children come flocking from every room to hear the joke and laugh with him.

"At breakfast he never opens his mouth except to crack jokes, and his children laugh so immoderately at them that they eat practically nothing, and thus the butcher's bill is kept down.

"If he says nothing serious to any one, so also no one says anything serious to him. He is the cause of jokes from men whom no one would suspect of a sense of humor, and his progress is punctuated by ripples of laughter.

That is a mixed metaphor, and nothing is so dear to the heart of a humorist as a carefully mixed metaphor. Just as the worse a pun is the better it is, so the more you mix a metaphor the better the flavor is, it being like a salad in that.

"But to return. It is all his pastor can do to avoid joking in his pulpit when he is in the congregation, and to save his pastor's feelings he stays away from church. If he is introduced to a stranger who knows of him by reputation the stranger's features relax into an expectant smile and, say what the humorist may, the laugh is there to greet it. He is funny; therefore he is funny. But should the stranger not know his reputation he may crack his merriest jokes without danger of evoking a smile. In this world labels are necessary, and reputations are labels that are pasted on a man to save the rest of the world from too much thought."

"Ha!" said the Average Man, thinking it was up to him to do something.

"Thanks," said the Humorist. "To continue: He may like pictures, and asks an artist friend to send him a ticket on the opening day of an exhibition. Rest assured that he will not be allowed to flatter himself that he likes beautiful pictures; that his eye is ravished by the counterfeit presentment of a landscape. No, indeed! His artist friend will hunt for a humorous picture and will take him to it and say, 'That's what'll hit you! Now say something funny about it.'

"Oh, how he has to enjoy that funny picture! He comes back to it, accompanied by his artist friend, and makes a new joke about it each time, and laughs until his lungs are entirely exhausted of air, and then he steals a glance at a bit of wizardry in marine painting. But his vigilant friend says, 'Here, you won't care for that. I think there's another funny picture in the next room.' So they go into the next room, and he has to shake his sides with laughter at a

humorous bit of genre painting and make new jokes about it which double up those who know he is a humorist. The others remain silent.

"Should he take a walk by himself in the woods, his constant desire is to find something humorous in the hang of a limb or the shape of a cloud, or something eccentric in the workshop of Dame Flora."

"Oh, please, Mr. Humorist, say something funny," said the Average Man.

I leaned forward to hear the jest, and through force of habit opened my eyes and found myself quite alone in the room. And, yawning prodigiously, I went to bed.

THERE'S a bootblack I know whose stand is on the corner of two streets, but just where it is, better not to say. If the general

public found him out it would make him self-conscious and spoil my little "cinch." For he tells me fables.

Yesterday I stepped into his little den and said I wanted a shine.

"Boss," said he, as he cleaned my shoes with a moist rag preparatory to shining them, "did I ever tell youse about der gilly dat bought grat'tude?"

"I believe that that one is yet to come to me, Jimmy," said I.

"It's comin' now all right," said he. "Dere was a young feller got to be twenty-one and his fader had erl to burn ——"

"What?" said I.

"Erl — karasene erl — to burn, barrels an' barrels of it, an' he says to der young man:

"'Willy, I'll take me hooks off a hun'red t'ousan' dollars for a minute. Grab it before I change me min' an' do all der good youse can wit' it."

"And der young man was knocked silly, because dis was der fois' t'ing he'd ever heard about doin' good excep' doin' a man *good*. An' he looks kin' of dopey an' says: 'Really, fader?' An' der ol' man starts to take back der check, but Willy has a fit of hoss sense an' he grabs der check an' runs down to der bank wit' it an' converts it into cash — how's dat?

"Well, w'en he had der money in his pocket he felt bulgy an' so did his heart, an' he says to himself, 'How kin I do der greates' good to der greates' number of me feller mortles?' An' den he t'ought how fond people was of der teayter an' how little joy come into der lives of der poor — dat's w'ot he'd heard a lady slummer say one day. Wouldn't it jar yer? Gee, I'm poor an' I'm happy all der w'ile. Well, anyway he squeezes his head wit' his snow w'ite han's, an' at last he says, 'I have it. I'll send a hun'red t'ousan' people to der teayter an' make dem happy.'

"(Soy, I'll bet your shoes pinch your feet. No?) Well, dat same day he calls a hun'red t'ousan' of der very poor togedder — soy, boss, der t'ing I like about a fable is dat youse kin make anybody do anyt'ing an' no one will say 'How improberble!' He calls der hun'red t'ousan' to him an' he says, 'Each poor man dat hasn' any joy in his life will please walk pas' me an' receive a ticket to der teayter. Dere is fifty teayters in dis town holdin' two t'ousan' each ——

"W'ot's dat, boss? No, no partickler town, aldo' it might be New York to make it easy. He says, 'Each one of dese tickets is good fer a dollar seat. I can't let youse choose der teayters, because dat would take too long, but all plays are good if you t'ink so long enough, an' I hope you'll all have der time of your lives an' remember dat it was Willy Hartgelt dat gave you dese little slices of sunshine. To-morrer may be stormy an' mebbe you won't

have no coal nor nuttin' to eat, but you'll have der memory of to-night to take into your homes.' He made such a long speech dat more dan one of der geezers tol' him to cut it out.

"Gee, it was a big pile of tickets he had an' it took a long time fer der hun'red t'ousan' to walk pas', but dey done it in time fer der evenin' performance, an' den Willy he spent der evenin' walkin' pas' der teayters an' t'inkin' dat everybody was happy on him an' wouldn' dey be grateful forever?

"Well, he had happy dreams all night, an' in der mornin' he goes into his ol' man's bedroom, an' der old man says: 'Willy, have you made up your min' how you're goin' to spend dat money? Will you build a hospital an' call it der Hartgelt Hospital, or will you buy ol' masters an' let der poor look at dem w'enever dey're hung-ry?'

"An' Willy says, 'Fader, der whole town is happy already. I sent a hun'red t'ousan'

people to der teayter las' night, an' dis mornin' dere are a hun'red t'ousan' poor people at deir breakfas' tables, t'inkin' of der good time I gev dem an' wishin' dere was more like me.'

"An' his fader got hot under der collar, an' says: "If dere was more like you, yer chump, dere 'd be as many lunatic asylums as dere are saloons. Dis is der day I disinher't yer an' sen' you out of me house. Youse t'ink you are a spreader of sunshine, but you've spread it so thin dat it's full of holes by dis time. Evaporate!'

"An' der young man evaporated into der street widout a cent an' widout his breakfas', an' he went to each one of der hun'red t'ousan' dat he had staked to a slice of joy an' he gives 'em a hard luck story.

"(Keep yer foot still, please.) But of course each man said, 'I'm very sorry, but I'm a poor man meself. I'd rather hev had der dollar dan der ticket. Den I'd have some money lef' an' I could blow you off to a piece of cheese, but

now I have on'y der recollection of a darn poor play. An' anyhow it wasn't so much. If I was as rich as you was yesterday I'd do more fer a feller creature dan give him a dinky teayter ticket an' I'd let him choose his own teayter. I wanted a vawdervill show an' I got Ibsen. You'll have to chase yerself, fer I ain't got nuttin'.

"An' so it was all along der line, an' at las' he comes to an ol' geezer dat had been bedridden for ten years, an' of course he hadn' went to der teayter an' he didn' feel cross at der young man, an' he invites him in to share a glass of milk wit' him, an' he says:

"'Me Christian frien', w'en your fader gev youse a hun'red t'ousan' dollars youse went out to buy gratitude wit' it. An' der trouble was you wanted quantity an' not quality. Instead of buyin' a solid chunk of gratitude for der whole of der money, or ten smaller chunks, representin' ten hospital beds, youse went an' bought

a hun'red t'ousan' squares of it for a dollar a square, an' in dese days gratitude dat's on'y wort' a dollar ain't wort' carryin' home.'"

"What's the moral of that, Jimmy?" said I, as I stepped down from the chair and absent-mindedly handed him a nickel.

"I guess youse wouldn' un'erstan' it, boss. It's ten cents fer patent leathers."

ISN'T it lucky that we don't have to be good-natured at home? You take a woman who has been out all the afternoon calling on her friends and entertaining them by her witty and vivacious conversation, and let her enter her own home tired with the nervous strain that follows incessant talk of a witty character, and if she had to be vivacious and delightfully chatty to her own people — why, I wouldn't answer for

the consequences. Perhaps she'd have nervous prostration.

But, thank heaven, when she is under her own roof she can either be silent or cross.

I say isn't it lucky that women are not bound to be good-natured at home? but I can as well say bless the luck that makes it possible for a man or a child to be perfectly natural at home.

Why, if the things we say to our sons and our daughters and our brothers and sisters were said to our social friends the beautiful structure of society would disrupt with a bang.

Ill-nature at home is the great safety valve provided by a wise economist in order that we may be good-natured abroad. Imagine children who were never allowed to say the brotherly things that they do say when at home — imagine them abroad with their pent-up feelings ready to burst out. It doesn't take much imagination to picture the scene.

That witty after-dinner speaker who kept a

hundred people in roars of merriment and who made many despondent people forget their woes when they read his speech in the paper next morning, was not able to prepare his speech except at the expense of the nerves of his whole household. Why, his children had been reciting the speech for days before he had learned it himself — with the quick receptivity of youth — and as the day of the banquet approached and his nervousness increased, he made his household a miniature hades, and his wife and children told him that they wished such things as after dinner speeches had never been invented. But was it not better to divert some hundreds of work-a-day worlders at the expense of his family's peace of mind than to give up trying to learn the speech and spend the time in saying kind things to his sons and daughters who could never benefit him?

No, no, let the home be the place where we vent our spleen, and let us present to the world

at large our sunny side and gain reputations for being always pleasant and good company.

For a business man is at home but a small portion of the time, but he is abroad most of each working day.

But women are home most of the time. Maybe they would do well to forget this advice.

AMONG the jesters of inanimate nature the clouds hold first place. No hill is too majestic for them to sportively buffet with damp caresses; no object too sublime for them to caricature.

Here is one that looks like the Father of his Country. While you note the resemblance the saucy cloud takes up a reef in its sailing area and gives to George a snub nose that would have detracted from his dignity had he borne

it in life. Another shift and George has become "very like a whale," and the sportive cloud sails on to play other pranks, perhaps giving us a counterfeit presentment of Napoleon and then knocking him into a cocked hat — or better still, a French liberty cap.

Mount Washington itself is not safe from the mimicry of the clouds. Do you see that dark and heavy fellow whose aspect is portentously serious? Surely no humor lurks in that cloud. Wait but a little. He seems to say, "You journey days and nights, you earth people, to see a great mound of earth and rock that lifts its height to the blue sky. Is it not grand? Is it not awe-compelling? Faugh! that which was centuries in building I will dominate in a few minutes. I will eclipse it."

And the great cloud raises itself black and terrible far above the terrestrial mountain, and forms a chain of mountains so grand and seemingly so eternal that Mount Washington hides his

diminished head and plays the part of a foot hill to the stately "Mountains of the Universe."

Then with a roar of titanic laughter that earth folk call thunder the cloud sweeps on its way, dashing great gusts of rain in the face of Mount Washington.

A CERTAIN Cheap Philosopher was in the habit of saying whenever he heard that an old friend had passed away, "Ah well, Death comes to us all. It is no new thing. It is what we must expect. Pass me the butter, my dear. Yes, Death comes to all and my friend's time had come."

Now, Death overheard these philosophical remarks at different times, and one day he showed himself to the Cheap Moralizer.

"I am Death," said he, simply.

"Go away!" said the man in a panic. "I am not ready for you."

"Yes, but it is one of your favorite truisms that Death comes to all, and I am but proving your words."

"Go away. You are dreadful."

"No more dreadful than I always am. But why have you changed so? You have never feared the death that has come to your friends. I never heard you sigh when I carried off your old companions. You have always said 'It is the way of all flesh.' Shall I make an exception in favor of your flesh?"

"Yes, for I am not ready."

"But *I* am. Your time has come. Do not repine. Your friends will go on buttering their toast. They will take it as philosophically as you have taken every other death."

And the Cheap Philosopher and Death departed on a long journey together.

I HAVE been told that this is a hard world, and I dare say it is. In fact, there are times when I would be willing to swear to it.

But one of the chief reasons why it is a hard world is because we make it hard for each other and for ourselves.

If Brown, having the money to do it, pays his bills promptly; if Jones makes a point of treating his employees kindly; if his clerk remembers that a clerk can be affable without loss of self-respect; if Mrs. Smith realizes that a servant is a human being and not temporarily a slave; if you stop shoving women in your efforts to get "the last bridge car for at least two minutes"; if your sister remembers to thank the man who rose and offered her his seat — although he was more tired than she, in spite of her shopping — why, the world will be that less hard.

But how many of us remember that it is mainly human beings who make the world a

hard place? I say something unkind, and the world is measurably harder for the person to whom I addressed my unkindness; you treat your clerks as if you were better than they, and they treat you as if you were simply some one to be "done"; and so much of the world as is made up of you and your employees and myself becomes that much harder.

What a capital idea it would be if the people in New York City were to set apart a day in each year to be called "Kindness Day"!

Let the Mayor proclaim it a month in advance, and advertise it in all the papers of the country, in order that visitors from out of town might know what to expect.

Let each man, from the richest plutocrat to the humblest push-cart man — if push-cart men are humble — make up his mind that on that day he would devote all his energies to being kind.

Do you know what would happen if each one

practiced his or her part, and all became letter perfect in it for the one performance only?

Why, New York would stop being New York, and some men would go out of business.

A good place to observe operations would be at the Brooklyn end of the bridge at the morning rush hour.

Crowds laughing and joking, and bowing in a friendly manner, the way people do in the country, whence most of us sprung, would alight from trains and trolleys, and would make their way in an orderly manner to the bridge.

I'm afraid that there would be so much hanging back, so much of the "after you, Gaston," spirit, that the conductors would find it hard to keep their tempers as the time approached for them to start their cars. But a holiday spirit would be in the air. American crowds that are not getting anywhere are proverbially good-natured, and for once the crowds on their way to business, having risen

earlier to allow for delays, would laugh and joke all the way over; there would be no dresses torn, no expletives exchanged, no hard words anywhere.

And the policemen on street corners would answer questions politely, and go half a block out of their way to direct strangers — just as they do in other cities, even now.

Arrived at their places of business, there would be no hard looks. Every one would be on time, and each one would try to do all he could to make the labors of the day easier. The underpaid clerk would try to give as good value as if he had been well paid; the underpaying employer would make up his mind to give all the deserving clerks a raise; the elevator men and the box-office clerks would be civil to the thoughtless women who asked fool questions, and the women who ask fool questions would get a glimmer of an idea as to their tendency, and would keep a watch on their tongues.

Shoppers — but there would be no shoppers on Kindness Day. No women who were trying to be kind would ask tired salesgirls to show goods that they had no intention of buying.

No, the stores would be less crowded than usual. Women would step quickly to the counters, ask for what they wanted, pay for it and walk quickly away.

Floor-walkers would walk around asking salesgirls if they did not wish to sit down for a while. Owners of department stores would poke their heads into the basements, and, noticing the foul air, would resolve on having ventilators and electric fans put in at once; and, being men of action, their kindness would bear immediate fruit, whereas, if they had waited until next day, their habitual carelessness of others' comfort would have prevented the reform. Men who have already worked such reforms in their stores would spend the day thinking up new ways of making labor pleasant.

Business men on Kindness Day would find out that the office boy had a name, and would not shout "Here, boy!"

And the office boy — well, it would be hard work for him to be anything but the heedless little fellow he had always been. Still, if the proclamation had been made early enough, and if he had been coached a little by the stock clerk or the assistant bookkeeper, he may very well have learned the lesson. Perhaps he would refrain from fighting with the boy on the floor below in the lower hall at lunch time. Who knows?

I once heard a man on an elevated train say: "I never give my seat to a working girl. If she comes down to work she takes the consequences. If I see that it's a lady who wants a seat, I give it to her."

On Kindness Day even this — gentleman would give up his seat to any one in skirts.

And the cabmen. Well, really, cabmen can

be kind — on Kindness Day. They have two ways open to them: they can be merciful to their beasts, and they can stick to legal tariffs.

I don't know why it is, but the phrase "a kind cabman" sounds curious. And yet there is no doubt that cabmen, being human beings, have just as much capability for kindness as — hotel clerks, for instance.

Teachers in the schools, public and private, would have a little more patience on Kindness Day. They would remember their own hatred of cross teachers, and they would make the day one to be remembered by pupils who, in their turn, would realize, perhaps for the first time in their lives, that teachers do not enjoy teaching forgetful, mischievous pupils, and — but I don't know whether boys and girls wouldn't be boys and girls just the same one day as another; the good ones as good as usual and the bad ones just as bad. It takes about forty or fifty years to make some bad children good.

By noon of Kindness Day, any stranger alighting from an air ship in New York would imagine that he was in the suburbs of Heaven. Nothing but laughter and high spirits; salaries being raised on every side, men working like beavers and singing like larks; walking delegates sitting still and looking happy; strikers and capitalists exchanging lights and views about the weather; pickpockets taking a holiday instead of a purse; car conductors keeping their much tried tempers — that is all a New York car conductor could be expected to do without more than one day's training. New York would be a show place on Kindness Day.

YES, sir, I'm going to Chicago on business," said Binkersley to a suburbanite who had stopped in to buy a pair of gloves. "It's quite an expense, but my wife thinks I'll get it back

in health. Chicago is quite a bustling city, so I've always heard, and I may get ideas for my business. Castor gloves? No, we're all out of those just now. How would you go to Chicago? What train?"

"Why, there are a half dozen ways," said the suburbanite, who was a traveling man. "Why don't you get a pass?"

"Me get a pass?" said the little storekeeper. "No, sir. I've always paid my way."

"That's all right," said the traveling man; "but you know these railroad corporations are soulless affairs, and if you can get a pass, I'd do it."

"Well, how do you do it? Don't you have to be rich?"

The suburbanite was something of a practical joker, and he saw that Binkersley was already inoculated with "pass fever," so he said:

"Rich? No. It all depends on the way it's done. Let me concoct a letter for you. The

general passenger agent of the eight-track road is a jolly fellow, and if you hit him right he may pass you all the way to Chicago, and then you can do him a good turn by crying up the road whenever you sell a pair of socks. See?"

"Why, certainly," said the tradesman, quite delighted with the prospect. "I'll advertise his road, and may be worth a great deal to him before I get through."

"That's the idea exactly. You let me write the letter and then you copy it."

So the waggish customer sat down to his desk and wrote as follows:

"Mr. J. C. Gregory:— Dear Sir: I am nearly 35 and I have never let a man pay my fare, even on a street car. Now I'm going to Chicago. Do you think I will let you send me a pass? If you do, just try it and see what I will do with it. You will find my address on the heading, and any time you want socks or gentlemen's furnishings, drop in. Be quite sure that even

if you did send me a pass I would never say a thing about your road, as I think all roads are monopolies. Yours,

"JOSEPH BINKERSLEY."

"There!" said the customer, when he read what he had written, "Gregory will either think you're a crank or a very clever man. If it hits him all right you'll get a pass, and I'll have saved you $20."

"Say, this is awfully nice of you," said Binkersley. "Have a dress shirt?"

"Thanks, but I only wanted to buy a pair of gloves, and you're out of those, you say."

"You don't understand me. I want you to accept a shirt. I never would have thought of trying to get a pass. I'll save at least $20, and I like to feel independent. Take a shirt along."

"Oh, you want me to have a shirt on you."

"No, on yourself," said Binkersley, to whom humor is an unknown quantity.

The suburbanite allowed himself to be

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"blown off" to an open front dress shirt and a pair of patent cuff clips, and then he departed, smiling inwardly.

After the customer had gone Binkersley copied the letter in his own hand and mailed it.

Next morning in Binkersley's mail was a letter from the general passenger agent. It was short, but in the same vein as that which Binkersley had sent. It ran:

"If you don't want to break that record of yours on passes, you'd better not come up to my office and have a talk with me or I might fix you out so you'd remember it."

When Binkersley read this he was frightened at first. It looked a little like a threat. Then he handed it to his clerk and asked him what he thought of it. Now the clerk was a wide-awake New Yorker and he said at once:

"He isn't going to do a thing but give you a pass. You go up and see him."

So Binkersley went up to the offices of the railroad company and asked to see the passenger agent. The passenger agent had gone out to lunch.

"Pshaw!" said Binkersley in a nettled tone. "I came here expressly to see him. It is on business that is important to him. Something relating to the road."

Binkersley said this so sincerely and looked so as if he had come a thousand miles, that the clerk, who was a new one, asked him in to one of the inner offices and settled him comfortably and offered him a cigar from the agent's box, and Binkersley, the little "gents' goods" man, sat back in a swivel chair and smoked a perfecto that tasted very strange to him, and felt that he was practically one of the high officials of the road.

He sat there until he was so hungry he didn't know what to do, and then he asked where the railroad restaurant was, and he went down there

meaning to spend at least a quarter on his lunch, but it looked so very swell that he felt it would be small in him to spend less than a dollar, and that is what the lunch cost him, exclusive of the tip. He had no change smaller than a half dollar, so he asked the waiter to change the silver for him, and that obliging fellow brought back two quarters, which was in the nature of a hint. And Binkersley took it — that is, he gave a quarter to the waiter.

After lunch he "felt fine," and he went up to the offices again.

"Very sorry, sir," said the clerk, "but we've just received a telephone from Mr. Gregory and he won't be back until to-morrow or next day. He's called out of town."

Binkersley was disappointed, but he was a philosophical sort of chap and he had had a good time, and it was only a prelude to big business.

That evening he took his wife to the theater, a thing he had not done since he stopped getting

bill-board tickets. The theater cost a good two dollars, for he got the very best seats in the second balcony, and after the play nothing would do for this man-about-to-get-a-pass but a supper at one of Young's restaurants, and that made another dollar look extremely ill.

Next morning Mr. Binkersley went uptown, and he went in a cab. It was expensive, as he well knew, but it could be charged to expenses eventually.

The passenger agent was in, but he was busy.

"Tell him," said Mr. Binkersley with an importance that he could not conceal, although he tried to, "tell him that my cab is waiting for me outside and that I'd like to see him at once. I have been here twice before!"

This had the desired effect. That is to say, the boy delivered the message, and in a moment Mr. Binkersley heard a roar of laughter from the inner room and said to himself: "He's in a good humor."

A moment later the boy returned and said with a deference that seemed the real thing to simple Mr. Binkersley: "Come this way, sir."

Mr. Binkersley went that way and was ushered into the presence of a white-haired, bristly-bearded man who looked more like a genial farmer than the manager of a great business.

"Is this Mr. Binkersley?" said Mr. Gregory.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Binkersley.

"So you don't want a pass, don't you?" said the passenger agent, carrying out the spirit of the letter which the suburbanite had written for Mr. Binkersley.

"No, sir," said Mr. Binkersley in a puzzled tone.

"Then what did you come for?" said Gregory.

"Why — er — why, I mean I want a pass to Chicago and back, and in return I'll tell people to take your road."

Mr. Gregory had pictured a different sort of man from the one who stood before him, and

some of the humor of the letter seemed to leave it. He had evidently been put up to writing it.

"Suppose," said he, "we gave everybody in the country a pass to any place he asked for on condition that he advised his friends to buy tickets. How soon would we go into bankruptcy?"

"That would need some figuring," said Mr. Binkersley in such a simple manner that Mr. Gregory took pity on him and determined to give him a pass.

"Well, look here, Mr. Binkersley, I hear that your cab is at the door and I don't want your coachman to catch cold waiting for you, but I also want you to understand that I am general passenger agent of this road and if I want to give passes that is my own affair. You dared me to give you a pass and I am going to take your dare. Here is an order for a pass as far as Albany and return. That will take at least six

dollars off your expenses. I'm accustomed to having my own way and I insist upon your accepting the pass."

Mr. Binkersley was filled with mixed emotions. He was disappointed at the mileage of the pass, but he also wanted to set himself right with this man and he said:

"Well, thank you, sir, but you misunderstood the letter. I meant all that in a joke. The fact is a friend of mine wrote it and I didn't quite see what he was driving at. I wish I'd written it myself because I wanted the pass all the way to Chicago and back. The fact is I am in a position to influence a good ——"

The passenger agent had risen. "I'm very glad to have had this opportunity to see you, Mr. Binkersley, and I do hope the driver hasn't caught cold. You will exchange this order for a ticket to Albany and return. If you need any more passes write the letter yourself, as it will be a safeguard. Good-day."

He heard a roar of laughter as he passed from the room of the passenger agent.

"A very pleasant and jovial gentleman," thought Mr. Binkersley.

PERSONS returning from "the other side" have always expatiated upon the beauties of Richmond, its fine prospect of the silvery serpentine Thames, its long stretches of woods, its lovely terrace and its cooling breezes, and when the seventh day of intolerable London heat came and I found myself wilting I went to the office of an English friend, Henley by name, and said to him:

"Can't you leave business for a while and take a tired stranger to some cool place? I've known heat in New York, but never such pertinacious heat as this."

I have said that my friend is an Englishman, but were it not for his speech he would pass for a Yankee, for he is the incarnation of hustle. Our quick lunch places would be slow for him, and he would fret at the languor of the Chicago Limited. He is up to full steam all the time.

"Dear man, I'm awfully busy to-day. Still, it's always possible to work harder to-morrow. Come back in half an hour and I'll run down to Richmond with you."

Then I left him dictating two letters at once, and I rode on top of a 'bus up and down the busy Strand until the half hour was up.

I was near spent with the heat. I looked forward to a cool, shady retreat at Richmond, where perhaps I could listen to the song of an English lark or a thrush, and sip a cooling claret cup, and reflect upon the vanities of this world.

I found Henley looking up a time-table. He flung it down as I came in, and said, "Ah,

you're just in time. A train leaves Waterloo station in seven minutes."

Seven minutes, and it was a mile from Henley's office to the Strand. It would be a shame on a day when horses were dropping like flies to make a horse do a mile in seven minutes in crowded London. But I found that Henley was merciful to dumb beasts. He did not intend to trouble the horse, but proposed to make it in a walk.

I gasped, but said nothing. Henley has a hypnotic way about him.

He is an athlete, and when we left his office he made for the Thames embankment at an energetic heel and toe clip that gave me vertigo to look at. I trotted along beside him like a faithful and much abused dog. He is six feet three and has legs in proportion, while my build is not heroic, and six weeks of continuous sightseeing in torrid weather is not the sort of thing to train a man down or up to athletic sports.

"Say," I panted, with lolling tongue, "ca-n't — we — ta-ke — a — cab?"

"What, for a mile? Nonsense, man. The walk will do you good." And he burst out a-whistling, totally oblivious of the fact that death from heat prostration was hovering over me.

At Waterloo bridge I gave out. "A 'bus," I panted, and one happening to pass at that moment, Henley indulgently let me board it and followed me himself.

"Ah, the pleasures of the country," sang he blithely. He looked hot, but he did not seem to mind it. As for me, wave after wave of deadly dry heat surged from my heart to every pore of my body. My tongue clave to the roof of my mouth and my brain seemed bursting with the heat. Still we were going to lovely Richmond to cool off.

Arrived at the station, Henley found that the train for Richmond had not waited for us, but

had just gone, and the next would not go for fifty minutes.

"Quite so," said he. "Very good. We'll take a train to Kew Gardens and then walk up the banks of the Thames to Richmond. Far preferable to train. Have you ever seen Kew Gardens?"

I foolishly said I had not. I should have said that I had been born in Kew Gardens and hated the sight of them. Then we might have sat and baked where we were, instead of going off to be baked miles distant.

I don't think he waited for my answer. At any rate, in a moment he had tickets for Kew Gardens, and we were racing down the platform to get a train that was due to leave at once.

We reached it and piled into a stuffy compartment. Fortunately, we were alone. It is better to fry alone than to fry collectively like slices of bacon.

"This is cool compared to the underground,"

said Henley, as he saw me mopping my brow. If I had never been in the underground railway I should have doubted his veracity, but once I courted death for three stations in that sizzling vacuum, and then, like a rescued miner, I was drawn up to home and friends, and — mother: so I believed him.

Of course, the train did not start on time. The value of punctuality is an unknown quantity on local trains in the Old World.

When we finally did start, the air came into the carriage in thick, hot blasts, and ever and anon the hideous, sharp whistle pierced my ears, although pierced ears went out of fashion in America years ago.

I shuddered and gasped alternately as we sped past dismal, dreary, smoke-begrimed tenements, and at last we arrived at Kew Bridge.

If I could have stepped at once into the gardens, or even into a cab, I might have found the

coolness for which I had come so far, but Henley said, "Hardly necessary to ride. Just around the corner." And so he resumed his six-day-walking-match-championship-of-the-world-Madison-Square-Garden-admission-one-dollar gait, and I cantered along after him, with my heart beating wildly and imploring me to stop.

"Luncheons are expensive at the Star and Garter at Richmond, and, anyhow, we're too late for lunch and too early for dinner. Suppose we have a little snack at some place here." Thus spake Henley.

Again my heart sank. I had, somehow, looked forward to Southdown mutton and Champion of England peas and Bass' ale on the terrace at the Star and Garter. However, I was too weak to resist my friend Henley. He was running things, literally running things, and I was one of the things. We were passing a row of humble little dwelling-houses as he spoke — dwelling-houses that had opened their

doors to catch the transient stranger. "Luncheon, one shilling." So the signs read, and the shilling mark should have been our safeguard, but it wasn't. I think that the heat had made me idiotic, but Henley did not seem to be hot, and I can account for his action on one supposition only, and I hesitate ——

Well, we passed two of the little houses in safety, but through the open door of the third I saw a glimpse of wistaria and purple clematis and a little table set temptingly under the trees, and it called to mind a delightful and cheap lunch at Charenton in Paris, and I said, "My instinct tells me that this is the place for us."

To be candid, my instinct was no better than that of a hen. At the risk of wounding its feelings I say so. We went through the hallway and out into the garden, and found that the brick walls were volleying the heat across the yard in waves of intense strength. I staggered to a seat and sat down, and Henley ordered cold

roast beef and lettuce, and as they had no alcoholic drinks, he called for ginger beer.

"The good old roast beef of England," I said before it came. Old it was, beyond a doubt, but it was not good. Nay, nay, it was not good. Henley, who is hasty in all his movements, devoured it all before he discovered that it was anything but good, but I, although an American, am more deliberate, and I had time to discover that it had been too long away from its mother, and I contented myself with the lettuce, dressed entirely with vinegar, whose mother was vitriol.

The ginger beer was nice and warm, almost as warm as the day was. The flies found us out before we were waited on, and we did not linger for an after-luncheon cigarette, but departed at once for Kew Gardens. . . .

Oh, how lovely Kew Gardens must be in cool weather; in weather that is not so warm that you expect to see people falling like rain.

Hot as I was, I could not repress my admiration for the noble trees, the vast lawns, the diminutive tiger lilies.

"Come, let us go into the hothouse and see the tropical plants," said Henley, airily. I looked at him in astonishment, but the fellow meant it, and with an agonized thought of my little ones across seas, I followed him toward the great glass inferno.

Once, years ago, I visited the smelting-room of a brass mill in Connecticut and saw the mercury keeping at 130 with the greatest ease, and when I stepped into that Kew conservatory I wished with all my heart that I was back in the brass mill. Oh, how the trees and shrubs grew in that heat. I was afraid that they would burst their prison. I could hear my brain frying and spattering against the confines of my skull.

And that Henley, not content, must needs lead me up a winding staircase to the top of

the hothouse just so that I could feel from personal observation that it was hotter near the top. My friendship was strained to the point of severing while I was up there, and when we came down I fell out of doors and felt the cool sun shining on me, and thanked heaven that I had escaped from the fiery furnace. Poor Abednego!

But the respite was only momentary. The sun was not really cool after I had walked a few rods. It beat down upon me like a fiery mist, and I shuffled along expecting collapse at every moment and rather wishing that it would hurry up and end my sufferings. And that exasperating Henley was as cool as possible and as full of vitality as when he started.

"Hurry up," said he. "We'll walk to Richmond. It's not far."

How we ever got across that burning, though beautiful, plain to the river I do not know. But when we reached its banks I actually found

relief. That river, the lovely Thames, was the one pleasant memory of an otherwise frightful trip. Lazy barges floated by, still more lazy swans followed by peeping cygnets swam down with the current, busy little steam tugs rushed up the river making cooling breezes, and I felt that here was our destination; here was the place to stop and enjoy nature and taste the solace of "tired nature's sweet restorer." Ah, yes, to sleep under an umbrageous oak, whose branches had waved welcome to kings as they passed by.

But the cry of Henley was, "On to Richmond." Thus does history repeat itself.

All too soon we left the banks of the pretty river and began to climb hills, and found ourselves once more in a town with hot pavements and hotter children out for the hottest airings with super-heated nurses. Up, up, up until we came to a lovely terrace that commanded a view of miles and miles of the Thames. Ah, what

a place to sit and cool off! But Henley said:

"What's the matter with you, old man? I begin to think that you Americans lack energy. Come, we'll have a claret cup at the Star and Garter."

Behold us at last at the Star and Garter. But did we sit on the lovely terrace and allow the Surrey breezes to cool our fevered brows? Not much. The wine-room was indoors, and every window was shut, save a ventilating sash. Behind the bar a blowsy barmaid like a stranded fish gasped with the heat. We ordered our claret cup and drank it as fast as we could, so that we might reach the open air before the stroke came. For now, even Henley was hot.

We paid our reckoning and rushed out of doors. Beyond us lay cool and ancient woods. Soon the moon would be up, and we could rest and refresh ourselves and forget that heat had ever been.

But this was to be a veritable nightmare of an experience. Henley looked at his watch and said, "Got to catch the next train back. I'm awfully sorry, but my wife expects company to dinner, and I must do the honors. Make one of us."

Why did I not have the courage to refuse and stay by myself in the cool woods and keep away from London until the "wee sma' hours"? Why does one do any and all the foolish things that fill up a nightmare? I accepted his invitation, and the next minute I was sprinting to catch the train. . . .

That evening the moon rose, cool and serene, flooding the Thames at Richmond with silver radiance, but of that I wotted nothing. I was having brain fever in Henley's spare room in torrid London.

DOES it worry you to have your husband bring some men home to dinner? I mean, do you feel afraid that your guest will notice that you have a misfit set of table ware and that your maid is not well trained?

Recollect that if your guest notices those things to your detriment he is not worthy of you.

You are just as good as the best person who could possibly visit you. If you're not, it's your own fault.

Do the best you can with your service, be sure to have your food well cooked and palatably seasoned, and treat your guest as simply as you know how.

If he acts as if he were better than you he surely is not as good as you. If he accepts your hospitality in the spirit in which you offer it he is all right and you'd better have him out again.

But it is not worth while for either you or your

husband to bother with people who cannot accept your ways of living.

If the man who is coming out awes you because he is rich, try to remember some ancestor of yours who made the world better worth living in. If your guest awes you because of his culture, remember that you are trying to make life worth living to your husband and your children (perhaps you're not, but you really ought to).

But if the man who is coming awes you because of his blue blood, remember that kind hearts are more than coronets and tell him his grandmother was a monkey. It'll break the ice.

WON'T you please keep your big dog out of our flower bed?

I know how you like him. Used to have a

worthless dog myself once that I adored. He snapped at people's heels and I said it was his playful way. He chased wheelmen until he nearly lost his sight — too much ammonia in the gun — but I went on saying it was only his way, and, do you know, I got to be unpopular after a while, and felt it, too, and never laid it to the dog until he died and people began coming to see me again.

I like dogs and I like people that like dogs, but I think that a dog who is so fond of flowers that he comes and lies down on your wife's best bed of lilies-of-the-valley—why, he ought to be kept in his own yard, because lilies that have bedded a dog are never the same afterward.

My rights end where yours begin, and your rights end where mine begin, and you have no right to let your bloodhound bowl my baby over. It's fun for the bloodhound but it's death to my baby, and let me tell you that my

baby is worth all the bloodhounds that ever bled.

I see my voice is rising, and if I don't stop you and I will cease to be on friendly terms, but please remember that your neighbor's garden is a mighty poor lounging place for your dog, and if you hate to chain him up then send him to the country.

None of your friends will think the worse of you for it, and we'll put in some more hyacinth bulbs for next season.

IT was a magnificent morning, and I sat on the Bluffs at Block Island looking out to sea and watching the fleet of fishing smacks that were so far out that one might fancy them white butterflies hovering over a field of June grass. I was in high spirits and felt like proclaiming the

fact to the whole world. Who could fail to be impressed by the perfection of the day?

Just then Benton sauntered up. He's a good fellow, is Benton, but he is apt to be much aware of himself.

"Morning, Ben. Isn't this a day to go to glory in, perfectly satisfied? Isn't the world all right? to paraphrase Browning."

"Nice day, but I don't feel up to the scratch. Guess my liver's gone back on me. When I wake up I see spots. I have no appetite, my legs are as heavy as lead, and I am feverish."

"La-and sakes, what ad. did you copy that from?"

"I wish it had been an ad. for there might be a testimonial of my cure at the end, but it isn't. It's just the way I feel."

"Well, as an immortal Bowery character put it, 'Fergit it.' Chase yourself away from your identity. Climb out of yourself and view the wreck with equanimity and sit there and think

of what it means to be alive on a day like this. But whatever you do, Ben, don't take it for granted that everybody you meet is a doctor who is dying to hear your symptoms in hopes of getting a fat fee. I'm sorry you ate and drank too much last night, but I'm a durned sight sorrier you told me, because you don't feel any better for it and I feel worse. There's a rift in my lute. The day isn't what it was. Those white sails are a shade darker. Come, let's have a game of tennis, and we'll both feel better."

He beat me six to two, and when we were leaving the court he said, "I feel like a fighting cock, and isn't it a bully day?"

"Ben, it's the same old day it started out to be, only you tried to hit it in the solar plexus by putting yourself between every one and the prospect. Leave symptoms to the doctors, and if you must talk about health talk about mine, which is simply perfect. So long."

"TELL me a story, papa," said the little girl, and her father thereupon held the child in his lap, and with a twinkle in his eye, he said:

"Feth an' I will that, an' the name of me story is 'Cunnin' Larrikins.' Wance upon a toime there was a la-ad named Larry, an' they carled him Larrikins fer shorrt. An' wance his father was out plantin' peraties, an' the la-ad went to um an' axed would he tell him a story. An' the ould man said he'd be delighted to, an' would a story about a Frinchy do? An' Larry said it would, so his father began:

"'Wance there was a Frinchy from Parrus, an' whiles he was drinkin' his red wine an' 'atin' frogs on the sidewalk, his darter says, "Mon père, tell me a story, s'il vous plait." "Avec plaisir," says he; "I can rayfuse ma petite chérie not a sing.

"'"Ver' many years aggo zere was a gra-ate

beeg monstair of a Jairman man zat was weecked to every von, but he lofed hees daughtair ver' moosh, an' so ven he was dreenkin' hees beer she coam an' as' heem for un conte, an' 'e say:

"'''''Ach, liebchen, dere is nutting dat I can reffewse you. Vat keint of a dale shall I geeve you? Ach, I know. It shall be about a plack man who resitet in Nord Amerika. He vas laazy unt goot for nicht, but he had a peekanini dat he all de time say to, "Ich liebe dich," und ven he in dose cotton-fielts vas, dot cotton peekin', das kindchen say, "I vish to hear some marchen, popchen." Und he say:

"'''''''Why, mah li'l chil', Ah had n' oughter stop fo' to talk, but seein' de oberseer ain' aroun', Ah jes ez soon tell yo' one er dem tar-baby tales ez not. No, I won't needer. Ah'll tell yo' 'bout a crool Yankee dat lived up in de frozen Nort', 'way up neah Bawsten, an' he had a li'l gal dat he keered fo' a heap, an' one day he

was mekkin' money, fas' eveh he could, an' his li'l gal as' him fo' a na'tive, an' he sayed:

"""""""Goshtallhemlock! but I ain't no hand ter tell sto-ries. Haowever, I did hear a purty slick one t'other day 'baout a Scotchman who lived in Edinburry, an' he hed a girl was like the appil of his eye, an' so one day, when she up an' ast him to tell her a sto-ry, he said:

"""""""""Me bairnie, I dinna ken ower muckle in the way of folk-tales, but my auld mither used to tell me about a man who lived in Ireland an' who dearly lo'ed his chield. 'Tell me a story, papa,' said the little lass, and her father thereupon held the bairn in his lap, and wid a twinkle in his eye, he said:

"""""""""Feth an' I will that, an' the name of me story is "Cunnin' Larrikins."""""""""

And he looked at the child, and she was asleep.

"NO man deserves to be a millionaire," said the socialist.

He and the man with the honest face were seat mates on their way to Washington.

"I don't agree with you," said the man with the honest face. "I think that the man who has wit enough to make a million deserves to keep it. There ain't a man living who wouldn't make a million if he knew how. Now take the case of my friend and neighbor, Sam Barker of Lewistown, Pennsylvania."

"What about him?" said the socialist. "Isn't he the man that's running for Congress from out that way?"

"He is, and he's rich enough to be a senator, too. Well, ten years ago we were next door neighbors and we owned farms of about sixty acres each. Farms were worth about $10,000 apiece. To-day I'm living on a poor salary and he's a millionaire, and all because he knew

how to turn unusual things to account and I didn't."

"Tell your tale," said the socialist, who naturally felt like being social. "Let's go into the smoker where we can be comfortable."

So they went into the smoker and were comfortable — that is, they inhaled all kinds of bad tobacco, and impregnated their clothes with stale smoke, and the man with the honest face told his story.

"In 1890, I think it was, the accident happened that ruined me and started Barker on the rise. Underneath our farms there was a large coal mine operated by a New York company. One day, when the crops were all garnered — as they say in hymns — a miner accidentally dropped a match on some coal that was pretty well seasoned and it caught fire, and before they realized it, that mine was burning to beat the band. There was coal to burn down there, and it burned. They let down as much of the

Lewistown fire company as dared to go, but it was no use; the fire had got into the habit of burning coal and it went on burning."

"I don't see any chance to make money yet," said the socialist.

"Neither did I," said the man with the honest face, "but Barker did. This was in October and the ground had frozen up pretty tight, but day by day it grew hotter and hotter and thawed more and more, and at last I got into a panic and I said to Barker, 'I'd sell my farm for $1,000 if any one was fool enough to buy.' 'I'm your fool,' said Barker, and he paid me cash and I lit out. Sam said he guessed he'd wait for a rise. I asked him if he meant a volcano, but he only smiled one of his inscrutables and went on waiting as if heaven was coming his way. I moved into the center and put up at the hotel."

"One hundred and twenty acres of land, all hot, and no takers," said the socialist.

"Not a taker. Well, winter came on and it was a hard one. Mercury dropped like lead and the snow fell like feathers, and pretty soon we were all but shut in. Seemed as if the North Pole had snapped off and fallen on us. Railroads blocked, provisions scarce and high, and coal higher yet, owing to the fire. But Sam didn't suffer a mite. The ground was so warm on his land that the snow melted as fast as it fell and mellowed up the earth, and he fell to and began to hire men to plow, same as if it was spring. Then we began to have an inkling of what he meant to do ——"

"Truck farming in winter?" said the socialist.

"That's what we thought, but Sam had an idea better than that. He went to a Pittsburg millionaire and he induced him to back him — Sam always had an insinuating way about him — and the result was that he brought back a carload of men who went to work digging foundations for some big building. Air was so

balmy on the place that the men worked in their undershirts, and Sam had all the windows of his farmhouse open and only used a fire to cook with. Men slept on the ground at night, same as if it was in the tropics. I waded out there in snow up to my neck one day, and when I reached there I was astonished at the change. Just left my ulster and fur cap and mittens on a tree, and even then I sweat some before I got to where he was superintending the men. I asked him what he was going to do, but he was too busy and too hot to talk, so I came away again and nearly froze to death on the way back to the hotel. Pretty soon the New York papers were full of advertisements of the wonderful 'Florida in Pennsylvania.' 'Fine hotel, balmy air, modern improvements, table unsurpassed, golf, tennis, polo, automobile rink, weekly hops and no mosquitoes.'"

"Weren't there really any mosquitoes?" asked the socialist.

"No, I think the heat killed them or else they didn't know how to embrace opportunities any better than I had. Well, sir, that house was booked full inside of a week, and then the trains began to bring 'em, and the local liveryman made a small fortune running sleighs out to the edge of the farm on the arrival of every train. Barker had darkies with fans to keep the guests cool and porters to carry them on sedan chairs to the hotel."

"Eastern ideas."

"Yes, sir; well, he was born 'way down East in Maine. But his place was a pretty sight; trees all blooming and full of leaves and palms and fig trees also, and the grass and daisies and buttercups and asters too, by George, all growing side by side and golden rod coming along. The guests enjoyed it down to the ground. White duck suits and perspiration, and the natives roundabout with heavy coats and chilblains."

"Any birds?"

"Not at first, but Barker sent South and got a lot and released 'em, and then the air was full of song. Well, he got ten dollars a day from every man, woman, child and servant, and after the place had been running four months, and he saw that the earth was beginning to get exhausted and dry he sold out to some western capitalists for a cool million, and just in time, too, for the coal company had been at work trying to put out the fire, and it finally succeeded in leading Paultan Lake down to the mouth of the pit——"

"And then I'll bet there was an explosion, wasn't there?"

"No, because they'd drilled holes all around and the steam came up through 'em like so many geysers. But that frightened the guests and they began to leave, and then the earth cooled when the fire was put out, and as there wasn't the least bit of heating apparatus in the

hotel, and as that March was a very gusty, cold month, the house was soon empty, and then they had to shut up the hotel and go into bankruptcy. But Barker was all right with his million, and now I want to ask you if he didn't deserve his money?"

"Well, that was an exceptional case, and he certainly did. But I should think that his meat bill would have ruined him. You said that provisions were high and the roads were blocked ——"

"Why, yes, but he raised his own vegetables right off the farm; tomatoes, peas, potatoes, beans, corn, lettuce, everything growing in half the time because they were forced by the coal fire beneath ——"

"But how about his meat?"

"Why, I forgot to say he advertised that none need apply for board except out and out vegetarians, so he didn't need an ounce of meat."

Cheer Up

ONCE there was a little fish that lived in the Indian ocean, but he used to swim through the Antarctic ocean to the Pacific ocean, to the Arctic ocean, to the Atlantic ocean. And once, when he was swimming in the Atlantic ocean, he saw a little girl who lived on the Atlantic shore. She had long curls and short dresses, and a cheek each side of her face, and an eye above each cheek, and a mouth somewhere or other, and, right in the middle of her face, she had the dearest nosey-posey you ever saw. And she was trying to dig up all the sand on the Atlantic shore, to put it into her pail, and she was afraid that the pail wasn't quite big enough, so she began to cry.

Now, the little fish hated to see little girls cry, so he said, "Little girl, little girl, will you go for a ride? I am only going through the Atlantic ocean, and the Arctic ocean, and the Pacific ocean, and the Antarctic ocean, and the

Indian ocean, and if you don't mind riding pick-a-back, like your brothers, I'll be glad to take you along. There's a quite too awfully lovely beach on the edge of the Indian ocean, and I think there is a much larger pail there."

And oh, how glad the little girl was! She hopped up and down, first on one leg, and then on the other leg, and then on both legs, and then she left the pail and the shovel and ran down and jumped on the little fish's back.

But then she remembered that it would be Christmas day in a few days, and she did not want to miss that, so she asked the little fish if he could surely get her back in time. And he laughed clear back to his fins, and said of course he'd be back in time, and he'd bring back presents with him, so that she could give her mother and grandmother gifts from various countries.

And then the little fish swam out of the Atlantic ocean into the Arctic ocean as fast as

he could. And the little girl said, "This is lovely, fishy dear, but I am afraid that I am getting my feet wet, and when my feet are wet I always sneeze, and it makes my eyes cry and my nosey-posey gets red and rosy."

And then she sneezed three times. And the little fish said, "What are you doing up there?"

And the little girl said, "I am sneezing."

"Oh my, oh my," said the little fish, "but that's too bad. But here comes an old fish that has lots of queer things, and I dare say he has a hanky."

So the old fish came up and the little girl asked him if he had a hanky for her eyes, and he said that he had, and he gave it to her. And she said:

"Thanky, thanky
For the hanky."

But when she had wiped her eyes, and had rubbed her dear little nosey-posey, she dropped

the hanky into the ocean, because she had no pocket.

But her feet did not get any dryer, and as she kept them in the water all the time, I suppose that must be the reason.

Finally she asked, "Is this the Arctic ocean?"

And the little fish said, "Oh, yes."

Then said the little girl, "I guess I'm cold, for you know it was a warm day on the Atlantic shore and I did not have my coat on. I am quite sure that I am cold, if this is the Arctic ocean."

"Oh dear," said the little fish, "then I must get you a seal skin."

Just then a seal came swimming by, and the little fish said, "Good-day, and how are you, and have you an old seal skin that you don't want?"

And the seal said, "Why, yes; I'll let you have my own. I really don't need it." So he took off his seal skin and gave it to the little

fish, and he gave it to the little girl, who put it on and said:

"It fits as snug as any eel skin.
Thanky, thanky for the seal skin."

Finally it got to be supper time, and the little girl said, "I am very hungry."

"Oh my, oh my," said the little fish, "but that's too bad. Maybe we'll meet the jelly-fish and you can buy some jelly."

The little girl was too small to know that they make the jelly out of the ocean currents, but when the jelly fish came along, she bought some jelly, and fed some to the little fish and more to herself; because she knew she was fond of jelly, and she was not sure about the little fish.

And they went through the Arctic ocean to the Pacific ocean, and to the Antarctic ocean, and, at last, they came to the Indian ocean and the Indian shore.

And right on the edge of the Indian shore stood an Indian man eating Indian meal out of a clam shell. And by his side was a beauty pail, most five times as big as the one the little girl had left behind.

And the fish would have swum ashore to get the pail, but the man waved the clam shell at them with both hands and said:

"Go away, go away, you annoy me!"

So, as neither the fish nor the little girl liked to annoy people, and especially Indian people, who were sure to have Indian clubs near at hand, they came away. But they were lucky enough to find an India shawl floating in the water and the little girl spread it on her lap.

But now she began to be sorry that she had not gone ashore, for the shawl made her sippy-soppy wet.

And she said, "I am getting my lap wet, and I am still getting my feet wet, and when my feet are wet I always sneeze, and it makes

my eyes cry and nosey-posey gets red and rosy."

And then she sneezed three times.

And the little fish said, "What are you doing up there?"

And the little girl said, "I am sneezing."

And the little fish said:

"Oh my, oh my, but that's too bad.
Where is the hanky that you had?"

And the little girl said, "I dropped it in the water, for I had no pocket."

So the little fish said, "Well, here's the brother of the fish we met in the Arctic ocean, and he, too, has lots of queer things, and I dare say he has a hanky." So the old fish came up, and the little girl asked him if he had a hanky for her eyes, and he said that he had, and he gave it to her.

And she said:

"Thanky, thanky
For the hanky."

But when she had wiped her eyes, and rubbed her dear little nosey-posey, she dropped the hanky into the ocean, because she still had no pocket.

And after that the little fish swam through the Antarctic ocean, and he would have gotten a present there, but all the stores were shut; and then he went to the Pacific ocean, but there were no stores there, and then he went to the Arctic ocean, but the little girl did not want to stop there, because it was cold, and the Eskimo people looked angry when they saw her seal skin; and then they came to the Atlantic ocean, and shortly after to the Atlantic shore.

And the little girl jumped off the little fish's back, and kissed him on the tip of his wet little nose and said:

"Thanky for the lovely ride
Through the ocean's flowing tide."

And the little fish said, "Good-by, and try not to get your feet any wetter."

And the little girl promised to try, and then she sat down on the shore to dry them; and it was Christmas morning before they were quite dry; and all that time she dug in the sand, and filled her pail and wondered what her mother and grandmother would say when they saw her.

And on Christmas morning she went up to the house, and found her mother and her grandmother just starting out to look for her. For she had been gone four days, and they were beginning to worry.

"Merry Christmas!" said she. "Here is a seal skin for you, mother, and an India shawl for grandmother."

Then her mother and grandmother both kissed her, and gave her a bright penny between them, and the dear little girl went right down to the store and bought a mackintosh for her dear little friend, the little fish, and sent it to him by the next mail, and now when he swims through the Indian ocean, and the Antarctic

ocean, and the Pacific ocean, and the Arctic ocean, and the Atlantic ocean, he never gets wet.

And neither does the dear little girl, for she stays on shore.

HOLIDAYS are instituted and holidays are abolished even as time works its changes, but the passing of the New York New Year's day has not been balanced by the acquisition of any holiday of equal interest.

I call to mind one house where New Year's day, to the younger members of the household at least, was second in charm only to Christmas. Indeed, it was a sort of little Christmas, for there were sure to be one or two gifts for the children and as much feasting as on that great day, although the eatables were sprinkled through

the whole of the festival instead of being served at one groaning table in the afternoon.

The early morning had not the charm of Christmas and Independence day. Indeed, it was a little dull, for New Year's day did not really begin until the first caller had come. Still, there was expectancy in the air, and there was the annual conversion of the covered fireplace into an open grate with cannel-coal, that burned with a delicate odor that somehow seemed associated with David Copperfield, although it might be hard to establish the connection.

The first caller was apt to be a rich cousin who was engaged in the tea trade, and who had actually been to Japan. He was tall and thin and distinguished-looking, with humorous eyes, and a way of talking to the two youngsters that each year confirmed them in the opinion that he was the drollest of mortals, although, I fancy, his jests were as cut-and-dried as his tea. He

was sure to bring gifts, no less than a penny each for the two boys, and a box of kid gloves for the sister entering on womanhood. One of his jokes is so intimately associated with New Year's day that I am sure he must have made it every time he came, which was only on that holiday. It was in the form of a conundrum, and the query was, "What was Joan of Arc made of?" the answer being, "Maid of Orléans." I remember that one of the boys imagined that Joan of Arc, whoever she was, must be very sticky to be made of molasses; but although he did not see the joke for several years, he always laughed as heartily as his elder brother, and wished New Year's day came oftener.

The rich cousin took his departure, and before there was time to discuss him or to gloat over the pennies, the bell would ring and a gentleman of the old school would be announced. He was short and stout. He had been best man at grandmother's wedding, and the little boys

knew that she admired him; but he gave no pennies, and naturally could not vie with the rich tea cousin. However, he was civil to the youngsters and did not seem annoyed at their presence, as Mr. Hewlett did, a little, dried-up man with trembling hands and twitching eyes and a nose with the blush of early morning in it. Mr. Hewlett always partook of refreshment, and smacked his lips with a disappointed air at the first taste of the lemonade, missing the "stick." Grandmother had pronounced views as to the morality of serving anything of an intoxicating nature on New Year's day. As she said, "It would not matter if ours were the only house visited, but when a man sets out to call on fifty people, and takes a little wine at each house, he is none the better for it; and besides, it is a poor example for young men and a bad beginning for the new year." Which was eminently correct and wise, but one of the little boys used to think it would be a very pleasant

thing to take a little at every house, so as to compare the flavors.

There were those who called who relied upon none of the conventional forms of speech, and these, to childish imaginations, seemed out of touch with the spirit of the day. One could talk of the opera and Parepa-Rosa and Theodore Thomas and Pauline Lucca any day, but the main thing to be accomplished on New Year's day was a certain number of calls made on one hand, and a certain number received on the other. That being the game, why not play it and compare notes? So the young man who came in and said, "Happy New Year! Lovely day, isn't it? Do you think the custom is dying out? Yes, this is my twenty-fifth call. Jack Bullard and I are going to make fifty, and we'll really have to be going. Thanks, I believe I will; I remember your lemonade. Good-by. Happy New Year!" seemed to live up to the requirements of the day, and appealed more

strongly to the imagination than the man who came and, without a word about the day or the customs or other calls, plunged into an animated talk with grandmother upon the comparative excellence of Campanini and Mario, or the charms of the Jenny Lind of years gone by. Jenny Lind — she or her counterfeit presentment — was inside the cover of a trunk in the attic, and she had very soft eyes and queer clothes; but she seemed hardly a fit subject of conversation on a day that came but once in a whole year.

So the hours passed. In the afternoon the two boys would call upon six or seven in the near vicinity, and the length of their calls was to be gaged by the breadth of the lunch-table. There was one lady whom they disliked exceedingly, and who hated children, but oh, what delicious wine-jelly she had, and her sponge-cake would make a boy forget home. She generally told the boys when she thought they

had eaten enough, and she never by any chance hit it right; but after several hints they would take up their hats and go to call on some one whose charm of manner, great as it was, did not make up to them for the paucity of her New Year's offering.

As the boys grew older they called with their father on various families, and heard *ad nauseam*, "How much that boy does look like his mother!" or, "I'll venture that they are a handful," when they were not, by any means, or at least one of them was not; I do not know but the other was.

There was one house much beloved of the youngsters, and aside from the excellent luncheon that was set there, it had another point of interest, for it was rumored that the hostess, who was a very intellectual woman and a lover of children withal, was in the habit of saying, "The devil!" when occasion warranted, and the boys always lived in the hope that she would

say it while they were present. But she never did, although they called there for years. How little some people try to live up to their reputations!

There was a place to which one of the lads once went with his father, and as the talk was dull and the table small, he soon felt it was time to depart, and told his father so. Never will he forget his inward rage nor his outward mortification when Mrs. S —— said, "It is not your place, young man, to say when it is time to go." It took at least two lunches to fetch his spirit back, and he never called there again. The next year he waited outside while his father went in. So great an impression does an unpremeditated speech sometimes make upon the wax-like mind of youth.

Once, to the great joy of the children, a gentleman came who had called not wisely but too well, and when he entered the house he did not know that he was unacquainted with any one

in it. The loss was his, but he did not know that either. In fact, the boys' father did not think it worth while for him to stay long enough to enunciate the usual commonplaces, although I am sure that his enunciation would have been a delight to all. He took his departure with many incoherent murmurings, and an anticipated excitement was quashed.

Bedtime followed, and the children lay, too excited to sleep, and listened to belated callers as they rolled either in their carriages or their gait over the rough cobblestones, for New York at that time was not noted for perfect paving. At last they slept, to dream of calling at a house where the lunch-table was a mile long and where one had to eat everything in sight or be considered rude.

One of the children once spent his Christmas vacation in Boston, and he well remembers his shock on finding that New Year's day was not observed even as a legal holiday, much less as

a time for making friendly calls. It seemed a profanation to him for men to go to their places of business on a day that might have been made so delightful. But even for New York the day was doomed, and although it has not ceased to be a legal holiday, the peculiar bouquet which it formerly held is departed forever, nothing but the fragrance of old associations remaining.

This result was brought about by the creeping in of abuses — abuses on the part of both callers and "callees," if one may be pardoned a coined word. It often happened that young business associates, clerks in the same office, would decide to go calling together — a beautiful fashion, if they had possessed in common the same circle of acquaintances. But Clarence Vanderpenter had one set of friends, while Terence MacHanahan had a different set, and Otto Muller knew no one that the others knew. Nevertheless, Clarence and Terence and Otto, and sometimes Tammas, Ricardo and Henri, would hire a

coach, and would stick to one another like burrs, and throughout the long day they would make calls that, fortunately, lasted only long enough to enable them to be presented to people whom all but one were seeing for the first and, in all probability, for the last time, and then with a sextet of hurried "Happy New Years," languidly responded to by bored and tired ladies, they would depart to make their "one hundred and sixth."

One receives the call of a friend with joy; it is possible to accept the call of the friend of a friend with equanimity, and there have been instances where the latter has been promptly advanced to the position of friend; but when it gets to be the friend of a friend of a friend, patience ceases to be a virtue, and hence the wicker basket.

The wicker basket might mean that the people who had caused it to be hung on the door-bell were out of town — although in those days

people were not in the habit of going out of town in the winter as much as they do now — but it was more likely to mean that they were merely "not at home" to the Amalgamated Callers. Of course, if you were on terms of close intimacy with the owners of the wicker basket, you could pull it and the bell, and be admitted to the drawing-room, where, behind closed blinds, they were receiving those of the inner circle; but just as the Amalgamated Callers had given offense, so the Sign of the Wicker Basket, unless it were hung with mourning, often frightened or piqued away real friends, and thus two disastrous blows were dealt to the pretty custom of giving and receiving calls.

To reach a house where one had been wont to pay annual calls, and wherein dwelt a maiden whose charms of face and manner lingered in the recollection throughout the four seasons — a house wherein a feast fit for the gods had been spread — to come to such a house and to see the

tantalizing wicker basket dangling mockingly from the bell-handle, was to receive a dual thrust — at the heart and at its reputed entrance.

I have heard of mischievous youths who exchanged the cards in baskets on different blocks. Imagine, then, the wonderment of those in a house when the maid took in the basket and they found the calling-cards of dozens of unknown persons! Abram Suydam Rapelje's card would mean much to the Van Twillers, at whose house he had left it, but to the Bills it meant nothing, while Eliphalet Worthington's card was equally without meaning to the Van Twillers. A broken friendship might well have traced its source to this unauthorized exchange of cards.

The mania for adding names to one's calling-lists was strong in the minds of young girls who were receiving with their mothers and aunts, and who compared notes with their nearest neighbors by sending an accommodating brother

to find out who had made the greatest progress in the game of receiving calls. With these thoughtless youngsters all were fish that came to their net, and callers even to the sixth degree of dilution were jotted down on their penciled lists.

In those days New York and Brooklyn were not cities of magnificent distances, and a man's acquaintances generally lived within a radius of a few miles, easily covered by foot or by four wheels —"wheels" being then unknown. It would have been a sight for the gods if a young man, clad in a frock-coat or in evening clothes, had made calls on an old-fashioned "ordinary" (how extraordinary they have become!), high-wheeled and perilous. But riding the bicycle was then a very serious sport, and one not to be entered into lightly or by the many. And it was the many who paid calls.

It was in Brooklyn that the custom held on longest, and there a young man's social acquain-

tances lived either on the Heights or on the Hill, and he could attend to the latter in a short forenoon, and give afternoon and evening to the Heights. As for the New Yorker, he need not travel much above Fifty-ninth street or far below the beginning of the numbered streets to reach all his calling acquaintances.

As Brooklyn became more and more attached to New York, pending the wedding that later joined them, and as New York pushed northward mile after mile, and Brooklyn spread out in all directions, a man needed most of the day for traveling from place to place, and the cozy, intimate call became an impossibility. So, for one reason after another, the day fell into disuse.

Here and there on New Year's day delightful old tea-merchants and gentlemen with iron-gray "Burnsides" pay their courtly calls as in the days of long ago, and here and there, in old-fashioned localities, sweet elderly ladies walk

into ancient parlors with words of New Year greeting, and perhaps fall to discussing old-time opera favorites, comparing Jean de Reszke with Brignoli, and Mme. Sembrich with Signora Parepa-Rosa; but for the youth of New York the day is one impossible to bring back, and its charms are incommunicable.

WHEN Henry Corbould came home at twelve o'clock at night and saw a light in his study he was not surprised, as he had been expecting his brother Chauncey to come on from Boston, and Chauncey always made himself at home. Henry was rather glad than otherwise. He had been to a dinner where he had been wined to an unusual degree for him, and the floodgates of his sociability were opened and he was just in the mood to chat with

Chauncey concerning the art world in Boston and New York and perhaps to partake a little more of the cheering stuff.

He put his key into the lock noiselessly, intending to surprise Chauncey in turn for the latter's surprise.

Slowly the door opened, slowly and, strange to say, without noise, and Henry, advancing through the dimly lighted hall with all the caution of a burglar, stepped into the studio.

There was a man there — it was not Chauncey but a housebreaker. He had a suit-case half packed with silver-ware, and he was in the act of taking a pair of very handsome cloissonne vases from the mantel when Henry entered.

The typical burglar wears a rough cap with ear tabs, a pea-jacket and a black mask, but this man was attired quite modishly and would not have excited suspicion in any man's house if he had been sitting at the evening lamp reading.

He turned as Henry entered and slowly drew his hand from his hip pocket, disclosing a pistol.

"Good-evening," said he, pointing it directly at Henry's temple and lightly caressing the trigger. "I thought that you and your mother and the maids had retired. Been out dining, eh? Won't you sit down?"

Henry sat down and mechanically removed his hat. He was really not at all pleased to find a burglar in his study instead of his brother Chauncey, but he had always believed in the convincing quality of cold lead, even if it did not slip from the barrel, and it would not be his fault if the cartridge were exploded.

The burglar picked up Henry's hat, which had been on the study table and placed it on his own head. It was a silk hat of the latest mode and it was becoming to the burglar. Henry could not help noticing what a gentlemanly man it was who was helping himself to his mother's bric-a-brac.

"Our heads are the same shape. If you don't mind wearing a derby we'll exchange. I think that you understand that I can whip this thing out again in no time (putting his pistol away) and I'm sure that you will make no outcry. If I hadn't foolishly supposed that you were safe in bed I would have waited until later, because I hate to alarm a man unnecessarily. I had occasion to call here the other day when the front door was left open and the maid was talking to the girl next door, and I took a decided fancy to your silver and knicknacks generally. Some one in the family has a cultivated taste. I imagine it's your mother."

As he spoke he helped himself here and there, packing each thing away in the suit-case as he came to it.

"I say, I like your nerve," said Henry at last, but he said it with a certain difficulty. The heat of the room was having an unpleasant effect upon his tongue.

"I haven't a bit more nerve than I need myself, so I can't let you have any of it if that's what you mean. Now I used to be very different. As a child, I was so shy that my mother despaired of my ever amounting to anything, but I stand pretty high in my profession, and I don't think I have much to fear from my rivals here in the East. I'm from San Francisco, myself."

He talked steadily, much as a clever sleight-of-hand performer does, and Henry sat in a dazed state and watched him take mementoes of half a dozen trips to Europe, Egypt and Japan and put them away with a woman's deftness of touch in the roomy recesses of the suit-case.

"Got any whiskey?" asked the burglar.

"No," said Henry slowly, "but you'll find some port in the dining-room in the sideboard."

"Hardly, my boy," said the burglar, gayly. "Your Uncle Dud doesn't wait on himself when

he is the guest of another. Just go in and get me a bottle and one glass. *You've* had all you ought to for to-night, but *I* need a bracer, although I'm sorry it isn't whiskey. Port's rather soft."

Henry had a hazy idea that the burglar would be green enough to go into the dining-room himself, in which case he would have rushed to the front door and given the alarm.

"Say," said he, "if you weren't armed I'd fi' with you — fight with you." Henry had noticed his thickness of speech, and after that he talked with the precision of a well-drilled foreigner from whom words come correctly but not easily.

"I believe you, my boy," said the burglar, "and ordinarily it would be an unfair advantage, but consider how much risk I run. I *have* to carry a gun in my business, although I hate to use it. But just hurry up with that port, will you?"

Again the burglar's hand strayed pocket-ward and Henry shuffled heavily into the dining-room and returned with a decanter of port and a glass.

Leaning heavily on the table Henry poured out the wine, clinking the glass with the decanter. The heat of the room had also gotten into his fingers.

"I hope this is good," said the burglar, as he lifted the glass to his lips. "Sometimes I have to put up with awful stuff in my peregrinations. Say, did you leave the front door open? I feel a draught."

He tossed off the port and then he set down the glass quickly and listened. There was a noise of a heavy foot on the step outside, and then a footfall in the hall.

"Chauncey," thought Henry, and wondered if he was armed.

"A policeman who had seen the open door," thought the burglar, and acted accordingly.

In a twinkling he had the pistol out again and he shoved the suit-case with his foot until it was alongside of Henry. Then he placed his own derby somewhat rakishly on Henry's head and pointed the pistol at his temple once more.

A step was heard in the hall and a policeman entered the room just as the burglar was saying, "Well, next time you try to rob a house you'd better go armed. Officer, you're just in time!"

The burglar played the part of the owner of the house to perfection. As to Henry, thanks to the liberal dinner he had had and the sudden turning of the tables on him, he could do nothing but stammer and look the counterfeit presentment of guilt.

"Caught red-handed, eh?" said the policeman, glancing at the well-filled suit-case.

"Caught in the act. I'd been to the club and when I came home I noticed a light, so I let myself in softly and found this bungler at work. If he'd been armed he'd have had me,

for I had to get my pistol out of the table drawer, but I guess he's new at the business for he just sat down like a log and never lifted a hand."

"Been at the booze too long, I guess," said the policeman sapiently, glancing at the decanter. "Well, come along."

Henry began to talk, thickly and lamely. "Thish fellow lies. He's the burglar ——"

"Oh, cut it short. It's easy to tell you're new at the graft. Come now, go day-day like a nice little man."

"I suppose I've got to go along, too," said the burglar, buttoning up his overcoat and pulling his gloves out of his pocket.

"Yes, sir, it will be necessary for you to lodge a complaint against him. It's only a few blocks to the station house."

"All right, I'll be right along. I want to run up-stairs and see if my mother is awake. She might be alarmed if she heard talking."

By this time Henry's intellectuals were too befogged to realize the admirable nerve of the burglar in thus mounting the stairs and running an unnecessary risk just to make his position more secure.

"All right," said the policeman. "She might take it hard if she's a bit nervous. I'll be outside. You keep this house too warm for me."

"It is warm," said the burglar, mounting the stairs. "My mother is an invalid and needs a higher temperature than is comfortable for me."

Henry and the policeman stepped out of doors together. The latter had a tight grip on Henry's arm for he fancied that he was feigning much of his intoxication and he wanted to be prepared for a sudden attempt to escape.

Out on the street the pair waited one, two, three, four, five minutes. Then the policeman said, "I guess his mother was awake."

The douche of night air had aroused Henry's faculties. "Whose mother?" said he.

"His nibs inside. I wish he'd hurry up."

"I tell you that I live in this house with my mother ——"

The policeman was one of those men who, when they get on the wrong track, refuse to recognize it. Fat-bodied and fat-headed, the officer saw but one explanation of the occurrence inside, and that he had the wrong man never occurred to him for a moment in spite of Henry's hints.

"Don't. You make me tired. That's the way a kid would talk. Do you mean to tell me that when I caught you with the stuff at your feet and the other feller gettin' the drop on yer, that you're the master of the house? Any one could see he is a gent, but you're a lobster."

"Well, why doesn't he come out then? I tell you he's escaping."

"Oh, you love to talk. I guess his mother has the hysterics and he's soothin' her. But we'll go in an' tell him to git a move on. This wind cuts like a knife."

Still holding Henry's arm in a vise-like grip the policeman re-entered the house, and the latter called up stairs in a hoarse whisper, "I say, git a move on, up there."

A frightened soprano voice called out, "Who's that?"

"It's I, Henry," said Mr. Corbould.

"Well, you've got more gall than I thought, but it won't go," said the policeman.

"Mother, is anybody up there?"

"What do you mean?"

There was considerable agitation in the voice, and the next instant the bedroom was flooded with light and an elderly woman stepped to the door in her nightrobe. She gave a little scream when she saw the policeman and stepped hurriedly behind the crack in the door.

"What's the matter, my son? Are you hurt?" said the crack.

The big policeman's dull face was a study.

"Is this your son?" said he, addressing the crack as one addresses a telephone, that is, with an unseeing stare in his eyes.

"Why, of course, it's my Henry," answered the crack. "Oh, my boy, what have you been doing?"

What may have been her suspicions will never be known, for the next instant the policeman released Henry and ran down stairs like a behemoth. Then he darted into the study and the fall of his feet shook the house. One glance showed him that the suit-case was gone.

He went into the dining-room. The window leading to the little balcony was open.

The burglar at that moment was stepping on the last theater train on the Pennsylvania road with a suit-case full of very valuable articles.

He removed his coat and then he placed Henry's high hat on the rack and settled comfortably into the seat.

"That's where a silker came in handy. I'd give five dollars to be on hand when that old puddinghead tumbles to the fact that the old lady doesn't belong to me."

STRAP-HANGERS — and I use the term with all respect, for a strap-hanger is often a man who has given up his seat to a woman — strap-hangers look with condescension on suburbanites as a flock of tame birds of one breed and hue.

Now, to any one who has lived in the suburbs such an idea savors of lunacy. As well say that all strap-hangers are alike.

Why, take George Prentice, who moved out

to Cranfield, on the D. L. & N. J. road when he was a man of family — he's a suburbanite and he glories in it, but he is as different from Jack Hammond of the same town (sometimes referred to as the "gardener" for obvious reasons), as the Erie is different from the "Pennsy."

Joe Chevvins, who is a Mason to the last degree and often in New York late, says:

"If you want to see Prentice, take the 11 P. M. out of New York. If he isn't on that get off at Newark and wait for the 12 o'clock."

That shows the sort of suburbanite Prentice is. He loves dinners and theaters in New York — and he thinks that there is no place like Cranfield.

Prentice is connected with a manufacturing house in Liberty street and therefore he is an early riser. The other day I had occasion to take an early train to the city — the 7:07 to be exact — and I met him entering the smoker.

We sat down together. I started by rubbing the sleep out of my eyelids. Then I yawned and said, "Lucky a man doesn't have to make this every morning. I'm still dreaming."

He looked at me a moment and then replied:

"It would do you good to have to work for a little while instead of sleeping and pushing a pen. This is *the* train of the whole day. I always take it. I get up in the cool of the morning at six-thirty the year 'round and sit down to breakfast at a quarter to seven, and then I have a glorious walk of five minutes to the train when the air is sweet, and it braces me up for all day in the city.

"No place like the suburbs," he continued, "for a man to live and bring up his children. Only twenty-eight miles from New York. Easy to get to the theaters. I'm apt to stay in town to dinner and the wife meets me there (unless it's a stag dinner, you know), and then we go to the theater and take that 12 o'clock train out.

Sleep on the train and get to bed by half-past 1 at the latest. And you *can* sleep in the suburbs."

"I should think you'd live in the city," said I, busy with some thoughts about him.

Prentice looked at me as if I had suggested something evil.

"Wha-at? Me live in New York after I've tasted the delights of suburban life? Not much. Why, I was *born* in the city. I know all there is to know about New York. I'm there all day long, and what a man in business needs is change. Why, if they had a good theater in Cranfield I wouldn't even stay in town for dinner. But Mrs. Prentice and I are very fond of an amusing play — none of these problem affairs, you understand, but something with plenty of laugh to it — and so we go to the theater at least twice a week. And then I belong to a lodge and a club and that takes up some of my evenings, so you see

I get all the city I need, and it's absolutely necessary, for the sake of my health, to live in the suburbs where I'll get fresh air and a complete change every night."

"Then I suppose you get out early Saturday and work in your garden," said I, fully aware that I was talking to an enthusiastic suburbanite.

He looked at me pityingly this time.

"I've been a suburbanite for five years. Passed the garden stage in twelve months. Those who are fond of digging may do it, but as long as I pass Washington Market every day there's no need for me to sweat over a lettuce-bed or to spend time and money on such indigestible things as radishes."

"Well, then, you play tennis Saturday afternoons?"

"No, I don't play tennis either. No apoplexy for me. I belong to a sane family and I take my pleasures sanely. I generally have

the children meet me on Saturday at lunch time downtown and I blow them off to a lunch and then we go to the matinée. I want them to get as much fun out of the theater as Mrs. Prentice and I have. We go home to a late dinner, and after dinner Cholton generally comes in and we play cards until it's bedtime."

I thought for a minute. So far he had accounted for his week-days in the suburbs — but there was Sunday.

"How about Sunday? Walks and talks about nature?"

"Now don't!" said he, making a grimace. "Do you suppose we are the sort of people who take those nature books and botanize and snap birds on the wing and press butterflies in albums? No, sir! Sunday I take the family in to dine with my father and mother. They live near Central Park, and the children look forward to dinner with the old folks and a romp in the park afterward. Central Park is

the greatest breathing-spot in the world and my children dote on it, just as I did when I was a boy and used to walk up there from Greenwich Village. That was when there were goats up there and the comic papers were made up of jokes about them."

He was silent for a minute and the train passed a lovely piece of woodland on its way to the dirty city. Then he said:

"I tell you I love my little house out in Cranfield, and I dread the time when the children get to the age that will make the city necessary for them."

IT was a little old-fashioned drug-store in a side street in Greenwich village. The small soda-fountain would have been out of date twenty years ago, and the yellowing shelves

bore bottles and vials and dingy patent medicines that somehow reminded one of the days just after the Civil War. The low-ceiled place was dimly lighted by ill-smelling kerosene lamps, and the directory needed its chain to keep it from falling to pieces.

Behind the prescription counter, one evening, stood the druggist proprietor, a man not far into middle age, yet wearing side whiskers that seemed indicative of his lack of progressiveness. He was making up a prescription and revolving in his mind ways and means to bring about a return of the custom that had been steadily falling off ever since the smart young druggist had opened a brilliantly lighted store on the corner below.

The front door opened, and a thick-set, smooth-shaven, red-cheeked, humorous-looking man entered, with a waddling step caused by the undue stoutness of his two legs.

"Hello, what's happened?" said he, as soon

as he came in. "Why, it smells like a violet ranch. Say, I need some of that perfume right now."

Talking quickly and loudly as was his wont, as he approached the prescription desk, although he saw nothing but the shiny top of the druggist's bald head, he sniffed and snuffed, and at last stepped around behind the counter in a familiar way and said, as he knocked his windpipe with the edge of his pudgy hand, "Frog in the throat. Need some eucalyptus tablets. Say, but it is *sweet* in here. What's been upset?"

The druggist went on preparing his prescription. He compressed his thin lips to show that he did not care to speak, and the jolly little man continued, "Oh, mustn't talk to the man at the wheel. All right, my son. Might give laudanum in place of rhubarb. That's what happened to me when I was a kid. Stomach upset. Father great believer in red mixture.

Had a big bottle of it in closet. Also had a bottle of laudanum. I loved red mixture almost as much as candy, and when he held the spoon out to me I shut my eyes and swallowed quickly. But I didn't smack my lips. I said, 'That's nasty.' Father said, 'What? Thought you liked it.' Took bottle to light, read 'Laudanum' on the bottle, snatched me up under his arm, and ran two blocks to the nearest drug-store. They gave me things there that caused a regular Russian uprising, but my life was saved and has continued to this day. But my father was the most demoralized parent you ever saw until Little Willy was out of danger."

The apothecary had not heard a word, but he had finished putting up the prescription and he now said, "What is it you wish, sir?"

"Some eucalyptus tablets. Thought I mentioned it. I also want to know why this place smells like a bower of violets?"

The druggist gave a little dry cough, smiled faintly, and said, "I happened to break a bottle of my violet perfume. Does smell good, doesn't it?"

"Smell good! Why, there's a fortune in that smell, man. Early days of courtship, only girl I ever loved, and all that sort of thing. Are you advertising it much and is it selling well?"

"I don't have time to advertise," said the druggist, as he opened a drawer and pulled out a package of eucalyptus tablets. "And I wouldn't know how. There are so many people advertising nowadays that small advertising is a drop in the bucket and is as unnoticed *as* a drop in a bucket."

"That's gospel," said the fat man. "But why advertise in a small way? Why not do something to attract attention? Now, look here. I'm a normal man. Perhaps a little more wide-awake than some, but still pretty much the man in the street that we hear so much

about these days. Now, what happened when I came in here and was greeted by that fragrant salutation? That's what it was, a fragrant salutation. Why, I felt curious to know all about the thing. I want a bottle right off, but I also want you to advertise it so that other people will feel as I did. It knocks the Fifth Avenue preparations all hollow."

"I know it's a good thing," said the druggist quietly. "It used to be used a good deal by the old substantial families in the neighborhood. My father put it up before me. But why should you be interested in it? What is there in it for you?"

The stout little man squared his shoulders and stepped back a pace as he said, "Why, I'm *only* the man who crammed Breakfastbran down the unwilling throats of a credulous public. That stuff was a drug on the market. Done up in unattractive packages and selling about one a week. I made them put it up in packages

that gave you an appetite at once, and I made them spend thousands in hammering away on that famous catch phrase that covered every chimney on the East and West sides for upward of a year, and to-day the proprietor of Breakfastbran is an art connoisseur and needs a man to dress him and can't enjoy music unless he's in a box, and I did it. Now, if you want to have me work this thing up for you, I'll do it, and we'll make old New York the sweetest place on earth."

Just then the door opened and a young woman entered and asked for a glass of ice-cream soda.

"I don't have ice-cream," said the druggist, approaching her, "I can give you plain vanilla cream."

"Never mind," said the woman, and walked out.

"Oh, I see," said the stout man, as the door closed after her. "You're in business for your

health. You don't care to keep what the public wants. You're like the man up in Maine who was asked if he had somebody's or other's laundry soap. 'I did keep it,' said he, 'but there was so many calls for the pesky thing that it got to be a nuisance orderin' it, an' I gave up handlin' it!'"

"No," said the druggist, good-humoredly, "I'm not as bad as that. I'd like to build up a better business, but I get discouraged. I'm off the line of travel."

"Then create a new line of travel by carrying a line of goods that will cause travel in your direction."

The druggist shook his head dubiously.

The door opened, and the young woman who had wanted ice-cream soda came in again and said, "How much is your violet perfume a bottle?"

"See there?" ejaculated the stout man.

The druggist told her the price, and she

bought a bottle, which he wrapped up neatly in the way known of old-fashioned druggists, and she went out with her purchase.

The door was no sooner closed upon her than the stout man said, "She bought that because you advertised it by breaking that bottle. Now, see here. I'm something of a plunger and I'm willing to put five thousand dollars into the exploiting of your violet perfume if you'll give me a royalty of twenty per cent. on its sale."

"That seems fair," said the druggist, pulling at his whiskers thoughtfully. "But it also seems mad. How can you get your money back? There aren't many people that call for violet perfume."

"Oh, it's a cinch. You can begin to get your picture-gallery ready, pick out your man to dress you, and give the dimensions of the box you want at the opera."

Cheer Up

IT was a balmy Saturday afternoon in early spring. Fifth Avenue and Broadway were thronged by the usual crowd, made up of Brooklynites, suburbanites, Harlemites and travelers, with here and there a New Yorker born and bred. They moved north and south, some of them clad in the habiliments of fashion, but more clothed in the coverings of necessity.

At the junction of Fifth Avenue and Broadway and Twenty-third Street, many stopped to look at the huge bottle of perfumery on wheels that was slowly coming up the Avenue.

The bottle was ten feet high, and was made of violet-colored glass bearing a white label setting forth the fact that it contained "Hood's Wood Violet." The bottle was set on four violet-colored wheels, and the driver was clothed like a page in a suit of violet velvet, and walked alongside of the bottle driving four Shetland ponies in violet-hued harness and bearing violet aigrettes on their heads.

The boy driver was pretty, the ponies were "cute," the bottle was of graceful shape, and more than one person made the original remark, "What won't they do next?"

What they did do next was of an astonishing nature.

Just who did it or how it was done was apparent to few, and they did not tell the policeman; but just as the bottle had cleared the tracks of the cross-town lines and had entered upon the plaza, a loud crash was heard, the bottle disappeared in a wreckage of glass, and the balmy air was made more balmy by the penetrative odor of "Hood's Wood Violet," which watered the streets for the space of the third of a block.

Little boys and boys not so little lost no time in dipping handkerchiefs into the fragrant flood; one small street urchin deliberately lay down on his back in the perfume and rose sweeter than he had ever been in his nine years; horses

stepped through it and bore a fragrance as of a bed of violets far up the Avenue.

The usual crowd collected and the usual inquiries were made, but no one seemed to know who had thrown the Belgian paving-stone which lay in the crush of glass upon the asphalt pavement. The ponies had started to run, but had been stopped almost instantly by their little driver, who seemed exceedingly unconcerned except that the breaking of so much glass naturally pleased him.

For rods around people sniffed the air delightedly. Not a few felt a longing to get out into the country, but more felt that they wouldn't mind owning a little perfume like that themselves.

It could not have been more than two minutes after the accident when twenty little pages clad in violet arrived on the scene and began to distribute handbills which were gotten up to resemble miniature "extras." The handbills read:

"Full account of the cause of the fragrance in this part of the city.

"The bottle that was wrecked at Madison Square was filled with 'Hood's Wood Violet.' If you like the perfume, why not buy a fifty-cent bottle at Hood's Drugstore, 6 Grove Street? Or ask your druggist for it.

"'Hood's Wood Violet' is the most delicate perfume on the market. Every one is speaking about it."

And every one was. It was singular how strong and how penetrating the delicate essence was. Ladies whose skirts trailed through it bore the sylvan sweetness on their clothes for days. Not a train out of town that afternoon but carried some involuntarily beperfumed man or woman with a story of the sweet disaster.

Before nightfall of that day the little apothecary had more calls from customers than he had received in a week.

The incident had been enough of a news item to get into the papers, but, while some of the editors refrained from mentioning the name of the perfumer, it was noticed that others spelled

his name in full. And, curiously enough, those of the latter class had column advertisments made up of a picture of a bottle of the perfume, and underneath it the inscription, "'Hood's Wood Violet.' The most talked-of perfume in New York. Carry the news to your neighbor and buy a bottle for your sweetheart."

The little druggist made so much before a month was up that he thought he had better stop advertising, as every one must know about the perfume.

"My dear fellow," said the advertising man, who had that day deposited five hundred dollars in the bank as his share of the profits of the first month, "advertising should never stop. Why, if the papers were to stop advertising Teddy himself, the people would forget him. And I voted for him and like him too. But it's advertising that keeps him alive. The secret of success is advertising, and then advertising again and then never stopping advertising.

"Now, if you'll get a soda-water fountain that was made day after to-morrow and have ice-cream soda, whether you like it yourself or not, and if you will put in electric lights and make this place blaze at night, and advertise your old perfume every day in every paper, you and I will get capitalist's cramp from cutting coupons."

"I guess you're right," said the little druggist.

"Of course I'm right. And do you mind my being personal?"

"I can stand anything from you, for you have certainly brought me prosperity."

"Well, then, remove those Dundrearies and come into this year of our Lord 1906. Whiskers were all right in the nineteenth century, but this is the twentieth."

And the whiskers fell like leaves in the forest of Vallombrosa that very day, and their fall took twenty years off the age of the drug-store.

I NOTICED in the paper the other day the death of Peter Crawford, of the firm of Crawford & Co., iron merchants, of John Street; and among the news items of a later issue I read that Peter Crawford had left all of his money to a rich nephew to do as he pleased with it, and that the nephew intended to divide it among various deserving charities.

Twenty years ago I had exceptional opportunities for observing Peter Crawford, as for a long time Frank Aldrich, the man in whose employ I worked, had desk room in the house of Crawford & Co.

Peter was as hard as the iron he sold. Any one in John Street would have told you that. He would have told you so himself. He used to eat his luncheon at Farrish's chop-house and always sat by himself in the corner with his back to the rest of the customers. And Mr. Farrish's head barkeeper would point him out

to those who came in, and go through a pantomimic action expressive of head-punching. It would have edified the old man if he could have known this, for he gloried in his hardness and was pleased at his unpopularity. Not but that he had friends, but they were, in the main, men in other lines of trade.

When I went to work for Frank Aldrich I thought Peter Crawford the harshest and the most unpleasant man I had ever seen. The very morning I began work he stopped at my desk and asked me my name in a rasping, high-pitched voice that went with his dried-leaf complexion and drum-head skin.

"Alden Adams, sir," said I.

"Well, I suppose you'll fritter away Mr. Aldrich's time. They all do. How much do you get?"

"Two dollars a week."

"Well, it's more than any boy's worth. I worked for a year just to learn the business, and

glad of a chance. To-day boys are paid for doing nothing, and they don't learn anything."

"Well, I'm glad I don't have to work for you," said I to myself as he passed on.

That afternoon or the next, as I sat at my desk addressing envelopes, a pale-looking woman came down the aisle and asked me where Mr. Crawford's office was. I told her and she went on.

"Well, what do you want?" said Crawford's rasping, querulous voice.

"I'm Mrs. Seymour. My husband used to work for you."

"What, John Seymour? Wasn't worth his salt. I discharged him."

"Yes, sir, but he's just been run over by a horse car and he'll be unable to work for several weeks——"

"Never *was* able to work."

Oh, how my blood boiled at his unfeeling remarks.

"Yes, sir," said the woman; "but I thought that maybe you could find something for me to do so as to make a little money——"

"Never knew a woman yet who could do anything worth paying for. I wonder why you came here to pester me."

"Well, sir, John told me you were not——"

"Not sympathetic. Well, he told you right. If John had been minding his business he wouldn't have been run over. I can't do anything for you, but if you want you can write to my partner. Here's his address. I believe he saw some good in John when he was here, but I didn't. If he's fool enough to help you, all right. Now, do go along, and don't bother me."

The woman came away crying, and I remember wishing I had been paid so that I might show her that every one was not as hard as Peter Crawford, but all I had was a cent for my ferriage—I lived in Brooklyn—and I could do nothing.

Later in the week I was talking about Crawford's hardness to Jimmy Egan, the shipping clerk, and he said:

"I guess his partner must have fixed John up all right, for Mrs. Seymour's got a job at dressmaking, and when I went to see John at the hospital he'd a bunch of flowers from Schutt."

The shipping clerk's eyes twinkled as he said this, but though I noticed the twinkle I couldn't see the occasion for it, and ascribed it to nervousness. Twitching noses and lips and twinkling eyes are sometimes forms of St. Vitus' dance.

Mr. Crawford's partner, G. W. Schutt, never came to the office. I was on the premises for six months and I never saw him, but I knew that the firm had western connections, and I understood that he represented the house at Pittsburg.

Christmas came along a month or so after I began to work for Aldrich, and the day before

that holiday Crawford said to the cashier in a voice that pierced the remotest part of the store:

"I understand that old man Doane is giving away turkeys to his clerks. Doane is a blamed fool. The men won't work a bit better for him because of his doing it. When I was a boy I had to work for all I got, and there was no such thing as Christmas in the town where I came from, up in Maine. If I pay a man what he's worth, anything over that is charity and tends to pauperize him."

His exit from the store was the cue for a chorus of groans, in which I joined with heartiness on general principles. Of course, I had nothing to gain either way. Mr. Aldrich had already given me a crisp two-dollar bill for my Christmas, so I was happy, but I did feel sorry for Crawford's men, and I told his new office-boy that he was the meanest man on John Street.

"Meanest man in the iron business," said he.

About five o'clock there came a telegram from

Pittsburg signed "G. W. Schutt," and addressed to the cashier. He read it and then came to the door of the counting-room and said:

"Hurrah, boys; it's a good thing there's a partner to this concern. Mr. Schutt tells me to give you all one per cent. of your salaries as a Christmas present."

I looked over at the shipping clerk at that moment, and again his eyes were twinkling; but for me I felt a little downhearted. I was sorry I did not belong to the house of Crawford & Co. The telegram had called for gold, and, strange to say, the cashier had a good supply of it. He called all the office staff in, and they came back, some with eagles, some with half-eagles, and two with double eagles. Several stopped at my desk and showed me their bright coins, and my heart felt like lead.

In a few minutes the cashier came out and said: "Alden, Mr. Aldrich says I may send you around to King & Cumberland's on an errand,

as Tom is busy, and Mr. Crawford's partner wanted me to give you this for your Christmas."

He handed me a gold dollar, the first I had ever seen. I thanked him and went on that errand with my feet very light indeed. How in the world had Mr. Schutt ever heard of me? How different a man from that old curmudgeon, Crawford!

When I came back I stopped at the shipping clerk's desk. He was a sympathetic young Irishman and the friendliest man in the place, and I wanted to tell him of my good fortune.

"Isn't Mr. Schutt a Jim Dandy?"

"Yes," said he, and again the eyes twinkled. "It's a wonder he'd never come here to be thanked. Did y'ever see his photograph?"

"No," said I.

"Neither did I, but I think he's the living image of Mr. Crawford."

Now, this struck me at the time and often after as being inconsequent and entirely illogical,

but I never remembered to ask him what he meant.

Among the office force there was a black-haired, dreamy-eyed boy from some place on Cape Cod. We called him the artist and used to make fun of him because he was always seeing beauty in things that looked desperately commonplace to us.

He was a faithful fellow, but he always spent his noon hours drawing, and at last Mr. Pulsifer, the pump man next door, who was something of an art-lover, told him that he ought to study abroad.

"You'll never make your mark in the iron business, and you may do a good deal as an artist. You go and tell Mr. Crawford how it is, or else get your mother to go."

Now, Story—his name was Waldo Story—was, as I have said, a dreamy sort of chap, and it had never occurred to him that Crawford was a hard man, so what did he do but go home and

tell his mother what Pulsifer had said, and the next day she came down to speak to the old man.

He sat with his hat on all through the interview. I know, for I saw him through the open door. You could not say that Peter Crawford's manners were irreproachable.

"Well, what is it? Whose leg is broken now? When did he work for me?"

There was silence for a moment, and then Mrs. Story said:

"I don't understand you, sir. I'm Waldo's mother."

"And who in thunder is Waldo?"

"Why, Waldo is your clerk," said she as proudly as if she had said he was the redoubtable partner himself.

"Oh, the boy in a dream all the while. Well, what did he fall through? How long will he be laid up? Why didn't he use his eyes?"

"Waldo hasn't had anything happen to him, but he wants to go to Paris to study art."

Mrs. Story plumped the words out more quickly than she had intended, I dare say, and they plainly staggered Mr. Crawford.

"Oh, he does, does he?" said he, raising his already high voice, as he always did when he was losing his temper.

"Yes, sir."

"Mrs. Waldo, or whatever your name is, do you suppose that I went into the iron business so that I could keep people in hospitals, and art schools, and other places, and do my own work myself? Aren't there enough artists and other incapables without deliberately going to work to make one? What earthly good is an artist? *I* never bought a picture in my life. Iron's some use. I can see a profit in iron, but do you suppose there's any profit in pictures? A man buys a picture and his money's gone, and all he has is a lot of paint smeared on a board. That's all a picture is. Now, if Waldo stays here he may become a respectable member of society,

an iron merchant, but if he becomes an artist he'll go to the devil and be an object of charity all his days. And you want me to help him on the road to perdition?"

He paused, and Mrs. Story said with dignity, "Mr. Crawford, I had no idea I should hear anything like this or I should not have come. I thought that if you cared for pictures you might help him along and he'd repay you when he got a name. He is said to have great talent."

"Well, you've come to the wrong shop. If my partner was here he might do something, for Waldo is a good boy, but I have no use for artists. They are fifth-wheels, incumbrances, utter no-goods. Here, this is Mr. Schutt's address. If you want to, write to him. He may do something. Out in Pittsburg they go in for art, but I'm dead against the whole theory of paying a man for fooling away precious time."

He turned to his desk and she came out, crumpling up the paper in her hand and her

eyes full of tears. As she passed my desk I rose to go out to the shipping clerk, and I said to her, "You'd better write to Mr. Schutt. He'll help Waldo."

She evidently took my advice, for about a fortnight later Waldo came to the store with the happiest look I had ever seen on his melancholy face.

"Mr. Schutt is a brick," said he, and then he told us that Mr. Schutt had seen his work and he had showed it to some Pittsburg people connected with the art gallery there, and that he was to go to Paris to study art, and that he was to give Mr. Schutt an option on any pictures he might paint during the next ten years.

"I'm glad to leave Crawford. My mother says he was almost insulting."

Although I have changed his name, those who follow art matters will have no difficulty in recognizing Waldo Story. He certainly did have rare talent, and he applied himself dili-

gently and exhibited in the *salon* ten years or more ago, and afterward came to New York to live, but he never could overcome his aversion to the man who might have helped him but who didn't.

Strange to say he never saw Mr. Schutt, all matters being arranged by correspondence, but that Pittsburg patron of the fine arts bought five or six of his pictures.

Crawford's cashier told me two or three years ago that once when he went up to the house of his employer on business he noticed three of Waldo's pictures on the walls, and they were the only decent pictures the old man had.

I wish I knew what had become of Egan, the shipping clerk. I think if I were to tell him how Crawford, dying, had left all his money to a rich nephew, with the injunction that he do as he pleased with it, and that the nephew had divided it among various deserving charities, his eyes would have twinkled as of old, and he would

have said something about that invisible Pittsburg partner.

Surly, humorous, irascible, kind-hearted old Peter Crawford.

WHO of us has not known that type of man which is never content to like that best which by a general consensus of opinion is so labeled, but must ever seek out the unknown, and place it on a pedestal that o'ertops all others as the Sphinx o'ertops a plaster cast of it?

Now I love that spirit of enthusiasm and open-mindedness that is willing to believe that there are giants in these days. Giants there have always been and giants there will always be, but the type of man of which I write never by any chance picks out the one in whom you yourself have confidence; he never picks out a fellow

American either — it is almost always a Russian, or a Dane, or a Pole, of whom you have never heard, and so great are his powers of dogmatic utterance, and so magnetic his personality, that he makes you believe his belief — while you are with him.

Drop into his rooms some sunny afternoon, feeling that you are progressive and ever young in your own enthusiasms, and in five minutes' time he will cover you with cobwebs, and make you feel that you are a superannuated moss-back.

By way of opening the conversation make some chance reference to Shakespeare and the delight that you have lately had from seeing *Twelfth Night* adequately played.

His lip will curl and he will say:

"My dear fellow, Shakespeare is all very well for the ordinary mind; indeed, I'll go so far as to say that some very cultivated people find much to admire in him, but when I want to

hear the last word in drama I go to the unpublished works of Ivan Stepnovitch. They are dramas that will not act and were not meant to act, and that, after all, is the highest form of dramatic art. I want meat, not milk for babes."

Already you are beginning to feel that Shakespeare is pretty soppy mental pabulum, and you wonder that you have never heard of Stepnovitch. But I think that if our friend felt that his opinion had already been shared by others he would cease to hold it himself.

"Drama that will act," he continues, "is easy. Any one can write it. Clyde Fitch gives us plays that will act, but I do not place him even alongside Shakespeare. The real master, however, is the man who writes us plays that were never intended to be acted, and that could not be acted, and yet seem so real as we read them that we can imagine the greatest actors in the world playing the various parts. That's

what happens when I read Stepnovitch, a Russian who is as much greater than Tolstoy as Tolstoy is greater than Howells."

It is the same in the arts. You say something about the perpetual strength, the eternal beauty revealed in the statues of Michael Angelo, and our friend shakes his head, elevates his eyebrows, sighs prodigiously, and says:

"My dear man, we of the future are away past Michelangelo [note his form of the name]. Michelangelo was possessed of a certain power and at his best there is a charm in his work that still lingers, and I admit that his influence in the art world has been wholly good, but we of to-day need not look to Michelangelo when we can revel in the work of that godlike sculptor, Edouard Petrovitski."

You tell him that you never heard of Petrovitski, and he looks at you with holy compassion for a moment, and then he says :

"My dear fellow, why do you try to give your

opinion of Michelangelo when you admit that you have never even heard of Petrovitski?"

"Is he alive to-day?" you ask.

"No. He died forty years ago in Warsaw, and all of his works were destroyed by the Russian government because they were too revolutionary; but luckily for posterity photographs were taken of them, very poor ones, but still sufficient to place Petrovitski on a pinnacle that makes the height of poor Michelangelo seem like a depression."

You know that when you get out into the light of day your old ideas will reassert themselves, and you will once more love Michael Angelo's work, but just now you feel that he is not much better than the sculptor who did the atrocious statue of "Sunset" Cox that has been erected in a scarecrow position in Astor Place.

Your friend, with real eloquence, shows you how "Michelangelo" has no chance to run in the same class with this Titanic Pole, and you

find yourself sneering at the veneer of culture that could find so much to praise in the Italian sculptor.

Your friend is an all-round man. It is not alone in literature and sculpture that he is fully awake, and taking special notice; in the field of landscape art he is not only abreast of the times, but several decades ahead of them.

Perhaps you yourself feel that in art matters you are very much alive and open to the impressions of to-day, and so you say to him with all the confidence of a man who expects to be supported in his opinion, that, much as this country has been decried by Europeans as a dollar-loving land, we are yet advancing to the front in at least one of the arts, and that the best exponents of landscape art to-day are Americans — that France already knows this, and that America is beginning to realize it.

"I'm sorry I can't agree with you," says he, and once more the lip curls gracefully (he must

put it up in curl papers). "From the time of Lorraine and Poussin, up through the English and French schools to the modern American, there has never been a school that really produced an art creation in landscape fit to cause enthusiasm in a really thinking man, a man who appreciates his Stepnovitch in literature, and his Petrovitski in sculpture. The only superlatively imaginative and poetic, and yet absolutely truthful landscapes that have ever been painted are those of Eric Finsen."

You gasp and ask him who Eric Finsen may be.

Again that holy smile that pardons all your lack of knowledge of the really necessary, and then he tells you that Eric Finsen is a Finnish fisherman, or perhaps a Danish carpenter, who only paints on Sundays, and that his work is known only to an inner circle of appreciative souls, but that by it Corot and Turner and Millet and Constable and Israels and Inness and

Wyant and Rousseau become mere Christmas-card makers.

Once more — in his presence — you see how fatuous you have been really to like anything in American art, or the school of 1830, or the Englishmen; and you feel, without having seen anything of Finsen's work, that he alone of all painters has struck the right note, and that artists would better try some other profession in the future, as Finsen has already distanced them.

And speaking of true notes, let us sound our friend on composers — for he is nothing if not musical, and ten years ago he felt so mortally tired of orchestral music, as utterly inadequate to express the thoughts that arose in him, that he now never attends a concert of any sort, preferring to read the music scores in his own room and thus getting an absolutely perfect representation of the master-work of master-minds.

You ask him whether in naming the three great composers of all time he would include Bach, Beethoven, and Wagner, or whether he would leave out Bach and put in Richard Strauss (Strauss is really a sop to him).

"Oh, how puerile a selection! Why mention any of those three? Bach I might allow to remain for historical reasons, but Beethoven and Wagner I left behind me ages ago, and Richard Strauss — the main fault that I find with Richard Strauss is that he is so old-fashioned, so hopelessly melodic and conventional. *Till Eulenspiegel* is a tune to be whistled by kindergartners.

"No, if you want the music of the future, the real thing, the last word for all time in music, get the scores — if you can, they are not published in this country — of Johan Rubernek of Prague, a young man not yet twenty-five, but already past-master of the orchestra of the future. He has invented six instruments for the

purpose of making sounds that hitherto never existed, and when I read his scores all else in music seems banality. Rubernek is the *finis* in music."

It is time to reel out, and you do so, and find the old-fashioned sun still shining, and a piano organ is playing a "crudity" from *Aida*, and you rejoice in it. You go up to the park, and look at St. Gauden's statue of Sherman, and you actually like it, and feel that in spite of the photographs of Petrovitski's statues St. Gaudens is among the immortals. Then you go to the Metropolitan Museum and you dare to drink in the everlasting beauty of one of Inness's dreams of God's country, and in the evening you venture to like a performance of one of Shakespeare's "attempts" at the drama, and you thank God that you never before heard of Stepnovitch, Petrovitski, Finsen, or Rubernek.

But, nevertheless, you have a sneaking feeling that your friend represents the *creme de la creme* of culture. Dogmatism, great is thy power!

Cheer Up

JOEL BEECHER was the kindest-hearted, hardest-tongued man in Ridgeville. A pair of eyes that burned like fire one minute and twinkled like stars the next, he would kick a man off his front step and then invite him in to have a drink of hard cider and forget it. Ridgeville is perched up among the hills of Northwestern Connecticut, and for a long time her rough and steep roads kept automobiles away effectually, and the farmers stood in no fear of runaway accidents from meeting the new-fangled wagons.

When the first automobile came puffing up mountainous Chestnut Hill and caused Joel Beecher's horse to run into Joel Beecher's fence, to the great demoralization of fence, buggy, and horse, Joel Beecher vowed vengeance on the whole tribe of autos, electric, gasolene, and steam.

"By thunder and Mars!" said he. "What

do these youngsters take us for? Automobiles are all right in the city where there ain't any nervous farm horses, but when they take to climbin' hills that have bothered us and our horses for generations, and go puffin' and snortin' by like a gang of devils, it's time for 'em to be stopped."

"But, Joel," said his next-door neighbor, a summer resident who contemplated buying an automobile, "they've come to stay. You can't stop them, any more than you can stop steam cars or trolleys."

"Well, by ginger and senna! I'd like to see 'em speed by here after I've warned 'em as selectman that they can't! Near's I can make out this is America, and as near as I can make out America was settled in the country first of all. Cities were an after-consideration. People in the country have rights that city men are bound to respect, and when these nothin'-but-play people come puffin' and snortin' up on

these eternal hills at a rate to frighten a locomotive, they've got to consider that Joel Beecher ain't a-go'n' to have it!"

Just what Joel's rights were need not appear. It was not many days before he announced that the autoist who had frightened his horse had bought him a new buggy, and the day after that a large sign was placed by him at the foot of Chestnut Hill:

> All automo-bilers [the division was his own] are hereby forbidden to ride through Ridge Street at a pace faster than five miles an hour. Ridge Street is at the top of this hill.
>
> By order of JOEL BEECHER, Selectman.

Chestnut Hill was too steep to be tempting to the average autoist, and most of those who read the sign passed by on the other side.

But a certain man from New York, owner of a strong car and an equally strong will, saw the sign, and, chuckling to his companions, straightway left his mapped-out route and chugged up

the hill. It was something of a test even for this machine; but he made it, and, once at the top, with a toot of derision, he put on all speed and raced along Ridge Street, a country road some three miles in length, leading by a score of typical Connecticut farm-houses, at a forty-mile gait.

Joel was busy in his barn-yard, and he did not know what was happening until he heard the toot, and then it was too late to do anything. But it added fuel to the flame of his anger. His language was scarlet in conception, although almost entirely made up of home-made oaths. "By the great Godfrey of Goshen!" said he, running to the road and shaking his fist at the cloud of dust and the penetrating odor, "I'll be entirely hornswoggled if you go through again without a punctured tire!"

If the New York man had had the temerity to turn and come back he would have been met by Joel armed with a revolver, and at least one of

his tires would have been relieved of air. But the tourist was content. He had decorated the road with an eighth of a mile of pet dog, and he and his companions went on their way with glad hearts, thinking no more of Joel Beecher and Ridge Street.

That evening at mail-time Joel improvised an indignation meeting in the post-office. Most of the residents of Ridge Street and the parallel roads were there, and all of them were serious in their determination to put a stop to the speeding of automobiles on the venerable highway that had been sacred to the ox-team ever since Ridgeville was settled by adventurous Windsor people.

"Who owns the roads, anyhow?" said Joel. "Who pays the taxes up here?—do we or do those blamed city dudes? Would we let any of our own people play steam engine on this old street? Not by a jugful. And we ain't go'n' to let those smart Alecs come up here to race their bad-smellin' automobiles. I'm go'n' to fasten

a piece of tape across the road at 'Bijah Weedon's just as a hint to stop. Our own teams can lift it over their heads like clothes-lines and stand the inconvenience for the public good."

No one objected to this reasonable idea, and Joel continued: "And I thought 'twould be a good idee to have just beyond the tape, say in front of my house, a couple of ropes meetin' across the road and snapped together by clips. Our teamsters can unbuckle 'em and pass on and buckle 'em up again; but automobiles will be brought to a full stop, and then I'll go out and, bein' a justice of the peace, I'll fine 'em if they've been go'n' too fast."

"Supposin' they ain't got any money?" said one.

"That's all them fellers have got. Ain't got any brains, or they wouldn't ride in the pesky toys."

Joel's scheme was voted a good one. There was not a man on the street, with the exception

of the summer resident, who had any sympathy for automobilists.

Next day the tape was stretched across the road, about an eighth of a mile beyond the brow of Chestnut Hill, and about fifty rods beyond that the ropes were snapped together, and proved an effectual barrier for all teams. Indeed, there was much grumbling on the part of the women who that day drove by on their way to the meeting of the sewing society "at the home of Mrs. Israel Palmer."

But Joel, who had appointed himself inspector, was on hand to open the "toll-gate" for them, and he was audacious enough to say to pretty Madge Pierson that forty years earlier he would have demanded the regulation toll from her.

"Forty years ago, I would have lacked twenty years of being here, Uncle Joel," laughed she, and chirruped to her horse.

"You'll live to see automobiles abolished by

law. That's the advantage of havin' been born so late in the century."

At that very minute an automobile, driven furiously, was starting up Chestnut Hill. The chauffeur did not stop to read the notice, and the pretty girl by his side had eyes for nothing but the rear of the road. She acted as if she expected pursuit. "Why do you go this way, Harry?"

"Because he'll naturally expect us to take the valley road, and when I get to Ridge Street I'll go like Sam Hill and we'll get to the Baptist minister's ahead of your father."

"If nothing stops us."

"Nothing will stop us, my darling. This machine isn't afraid of any hill in Connecticut."

"Yes, but we may be arrested for speeding."

"Nothing but farmers up on the hill, and they'll all be at work. An hour from now you and I will be Mr. and Mrs. Bacon. Doesn't it sound great?"

"Yes, dear; only I wish you were going to take my name. I think Atherton is prettier than Bacon."

"So you are; but the longer we live together the more I'll look like you, you know."

Up the hill they went, the light machine responding to her levers as if she knew what was wanted of her, and longed to leave the pursuing parent forever.

In front of the house upon the hill stood Joel talking to his granddaughter.

"What's that, grandpa?" said the little girl, her quick ears catching the sound of the ascending machine.

"Crows," said the old man, chucking her fondly under the chin.

"I don't mean that, grandpa. I know crows. I mean that thup-thup, thup-thup sound."

"Your ears are better than mine," said the old man, his eyes catching fire. "I do believe it's a pesky automobile you hear."

"Do you want it to be one, grandpa?" said the girl. "I thought you hated them."

"But I want to show 'em the law's got to be obeyed. That's what I want! Yes," said he, cocking his head to one side. "It is one, sure enough. Now, you'd better go into the house, child, because I may talk some." The old man walked nimbly to a place midway between the tape and the rope, and awaited the coming of his adversary. "Yes, it's one of 'em, sure enough. Maybe they'll stop—I guess yes, when I read the riot act to 'em."

The machine made the summit of the hill, and the chauffeur, changing the gear, prepared to make a record run along Ridge Street.

"Oh, what's that tape, Harry?"

"Curse it! Some interference," said Bacon. "Hello! there's a hayseed."

The "hayseed," otherwise known as Joel Beecher, descendant of a long line of sturdy

farmers, advanced into the middle of the road and began waving his arms.

"We can't stop," said Bacon, and the machine sprang ahead, breaking the tape.

"I guess you'll just about stop in a minute," said Joel, pulling out a revolver and preparing to puncture the rear tire if it should be necessary.

At sight of the revolver the girl screamed; but her protector plunged doggedly on toward Joel until he saw the stout rope barring the road.

The roadway was wide, and Bacon managed to describe a circle and brought the machine to a standstill just as Joel fired off his revolver and —missed the tire.

"Say, old man, we're in a great hurry."

"That's why I stopped you," said Joel dryly, putting his revolver into his hip pocket. "We're opposed to hurry on Ridge Street. You've laid yourself open to a fine of twenty-five dollars, which I want."

"And then may we go on?" asked the girl. Her lover was scowling at Joel and wondering just how far he had right on his side.

"Then you may go on," said Joel in a softer tone, for the girl was pretty and had a confiding tone to her voice that was likely to make friends for her.

"That is," he added, "if you go on slow. This business of makin' a railroad of our street has got to be stopped right away, if I fire at every wheel that goes by——"

"And miss it," said Bacon suggestively.

"If you hadn't turned I'd a got ye," said Joel. "I warn't lookin' for that."

"Look here, Mr. ——"

"Beecher's my name. Yes, same family," said he, to save the usual question from being asked.

"Well, Mr. Beecher, your namesake was a fair sort of man," said Bacon quickly; "and if he'd been here do you know what he would

have done? He would have married us. We're in an awful hurry. Her father doesn't like me, because I'm not rich enough, and we are getting away from him."

"He comin' up, too? I'll fix his tire!"

"No, he's gone by the valley road. Can't you help us out? I'll pay the fine. Just show us the way to the nearest minister. One up here?"

"Please help us!" said the girl in a tone that went straight to the old man's heart.

"How old be ye?"

"I'm twenty-one, and Harry's older. We have a right——"

"Only your father won't admit it. Well, ma and me run away and never regretted it." He rubbed his chin reflectively. "There ain't no minister up here now; but there's the Methodist one down in Swamp Holler."

"Jump in and show us the way. I'm not sure I know where any one but Mr. Holden lives, and

he's on the valley road, and this delay has helped Mr. Atherton. Will a check do for the fine?"

"Never mind the fine, if it's a case of life or death."

"No, it's a case of marriage."

"Same thing hundred years from now," said Joel grimly. "I'd like to try one of those things." He looked at the machine with a newly awakened interest. "It's about two miles over to Abiel Pitkins in Swamp Holler. Take me there and bring me back, and I'll show you the way. You ain't got to hurry. Your father'll never think of Pitkins. He's a parson in a small way; but a marriage is a marriage."

Joel uncoupled the ropes, then got in and sat down in the front seat with an expression on his face midway between sheepishness and delight.

"Hark!" said Miss Atherton. "Is that a machine I hear? Oh, hurry, Harry!"

A moment later a green touring-car, pro-

pelled by a square-jawed, white-mustached man, appeared at the top of the hill.

"It is father! It's too late!"

"You can do it!" said Joel excitedly. "I'll show you the way. Let her go. By thunder and Mars! the old man can't git yer, if you keep cool. This looks like the fastest machine."

The automobile shot forward so suddenly that Joel fell back in his seat. After that he gripped the arm.

"We're gaining on them," said Grace, her eyes on her father, who grimly kept his hand on the lever of the machine and with set mouth rode like fate.

A mile was made at terrific speed. Farmers in the fields and here and there a housewife saw the two automobiles fly past, Joel, in the foremost one, looking as if he enjoyed the swift motion, and the man in the rear one looking like nothing but Nemesis.

"I can beat him on the level; but I'll have to

slow up on the descent. My brake's been acting out of kilter on hills," said Bacon as they approached the place where they were to leave the high road and drop into Swamp Hollow.

"He won't catch yer," said Joel. And he spoke as if he knew what he was talking about. "I'm seein' this thing through now, and you'll git married, all right. Your father is just about exceedin' the speed limit, and I ain't a-goin' to stand it much longer."

When they dropped over the brow of the hill Bacon immediately applied the brakes. A marriage was a marriage; but he could not risk the life of his bride-to-be.

Old Atherton, however, had only one thought: to overtake his daughter, no matter what happened.

"He's gaining on us, Harry!"

"By Godfrey! you're go'n' too fast, old man. I'm selectman and justice of the peace, and you've got to stop it!" Joel rose in his seat and

flashed an open palm on the pursuing father, who paid absolutely no attention to it.

"You won't, eh? Well, I miss fire sometimes, but not when I know the course of a thing." Joel pulled out the revolver and fired.

There was a second noise as of an explosion, and the right fore wheel of the machine of the hot-headed parent flattened down in the dust.

Atherton continued to move through the air, and brought up in the lower limb of a maple tree, where he was wedged helpless, yet not stunned.

Grace screamed; but when her father opened his mouth and began to talk vigorous English, she was reassured.

"We must get him down. I'm afraid he's hurt," said she.

Bacon chuckled. "Grace, don't you know when you're being helped by Providence? Your father's safe. When you are my wife the first thing I'll help you do is to get him down."

"He must understand," said Joel, "that we don't allow autos to make railroads of our highways. There's Abiel now, comin' out of his front door." The machine plunged forward like a belated mail-train. "Ginger and senna! but this is like flyin'! If 'twarn't so expensive I'd buy one of the pesky things myself. Hi, Abiel! Got a job for yer."